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ABSTRACT

Based on planning, training, and technical assistance experiences of services providers involved in the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory's (SEDL) Rural, Small Schools Initiative, this guide provides rural school administrators with a resource in identifying, selecting, and negotiating with staff development providers. The resource book includes: (1) a brief overview of the process of school improvement and systematic staff development; (2) practical guidelines for selecting staff development providers; (3) a directory that lists and describes organizations that provide rural and small schools either qualified external consultants for staff development or information that may be helpful in planning staff development; and (4) promising programs of staff development in rural schools in the Southwestern region, including contact persons and addresses for the programs. A bibliography of recommended supplementary readings on systematic staff development is also included. (Author/KS)

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# *Guidelines for Selecting Staff Development Providers:*

# *A Resource Book for Rural Educators*

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# *Guidelines for Selecting Staff Development Providers: A Resource Book for Rural Educators*


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# GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS

## TABLE OF CONTENTS


| | | Page No. |
|---|---|---|
| I | Introduction | 1 |
| II. | Key Components and Characteristics of Effective School Improvement and Systematic Staff Development | 3 |
| III. | Selecting Staff Development Providers | 6 |
| IV. | An Annotated Bibliography of Supplementary Readings | 13 |
| V. | Directory of Rural Service Providers and Programs | 18 |
| | Section One: Sampling of Rural Service Providers | 22 |
| | Section Two: Promising Programs in Rural Schools in the Southwestern Region | 68 |
| VI. | References | 114 |

# I. Introduction

This resource book is a guide for rural, small school educators to use in identifying, selecting, and negotiating with staff development providers to provide training that meets the unique needs of individual school systems. The resource book includes: a brief overview of the process of school improvement and systematic staff development; practical guidelines for selecting staff development providers; and a directory that lists and describes organizations that provide rural and small schools either qualified external consultants for staff development or information that may be helpful in planning staff development. An annotated bibliography of recommended supplementary readings on systematic staff development is also included.

The resource book is the result of the planning, training, and technical assistance experiences of service providers involved in the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory's (SEDL) Rural, Small Schools Initiative (RSSI). The book is a synthesis of the research on systematic staff development and information gleaned from on-going training and technical assistance activities in the five states in the southwest region: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

It is hoped that this resource book will provide the small school administrator easily accessible information for providing leadership in staff development planning. The overview in Chapter 2 provides background information regarding the school improvement process with systematic staff development as an integral part of that process. The guidelines in Chapter 3 describe the preliminary planning steps needed to ensure the selection of a staff development provider who can meet the needs of the school and methods for assuring the development of clear expectations for the staff development provider's role. The directory in Chapter 5 consists of two sections. The first provides current descriptions of over 100 organizations that may be of assistance in establishing staff development programs and providing training. Also included in the section are organizations and publications that provide research based information, which may be helpful in planning and executing staff development programs. Most of the organizations and agencies included are located within the southwest region, but some national organizations are also listed. The small and rural schools described in the second section of Chapter 5 were identified by SEDL because of their successful programs in systematic staff development and school improvement. Each program description includes a contact person who will provide additional information or who may be able to provide assistance in staff development planning or in locating staff development providers.

Rural and small school educators may also be interested in a related document, *Patterns for Country Stars: Systematic Staff Development for Rural, Small Schools*, available from SEDL. The training offered through this package is for the rural, small school administrator involved in school improvement and staff development efforts. Included in the package are training sessions addressing (1) school effectiveness research, the school improvement process, and systematic staff development, (2) the school leadership team, (3) campus goal setting and needs assessments, (4) action plans, training, and follow-up, and (5) implementing and evaluating staff development. The manual would also serve as an excellent resource document for those providing leadership to a faculty and staff embarking on a school improvement effort.

## II. Key Components and Characteristics of Effective School Improvement and Systematic Staff Development

Systematic staff development is an essential element of the school improvement process and must be related to the development and implementation of the campus and district goals and the mission statement. Based on research and best practice information relevant to school improvement efforts in rural, small schools, the *Systematic Staff Development for Rural School Improvement* model (Figure 1) promotes cooperation, content transferability, and adaptations for long-term program maintenance (Killian & Byrd, 1988). The underlying assumptions of the model are that, when school improvement occurs through staff development, the staff development is:

- related to district goals and priorities;
- focused on the campus level as the unit of change;
- planned and implemented by a school leadership team;
- "participant-oriented," involving participants in planning, implementation, and evaluation activities;
- an ongoing process; and
- incorporated into the district's planning and school improvement process as evidence of district commitment.

The *Systematic Staff Development for Rural School Improvement* model begins at the school district level with the mission statement and the setting of district priorities. These priorities set expectations and serve as guides to leadership team members at each campus, as they work with the faculty to establish campus improvement goals.

The school leadership team is an integral component of the model and provides opportunities to broaden the roles of teachers in school improvement, and support an atmosphere that is conducive to change (Sparks & Hirsch, 1990). Once campus goals are set, the school leadership team conducts a needs assessment to study all factors which have an impact on the school improvement effort and to establish a baseline for measuring effectiveness. The needs assessment findings are used to prioritize the campus improvement goals, and to determine the means for achieving the goals. Objectives that can be realized through systematic staff development are identified, and campus action plans are developed. The action plans provide direction to the training and to the follow-up activities during implementation of the plans. Implementation assistance includes providing ongoing feedback to participants in the improvement

# Systematic Staff Development for Rural, Small School Improvement

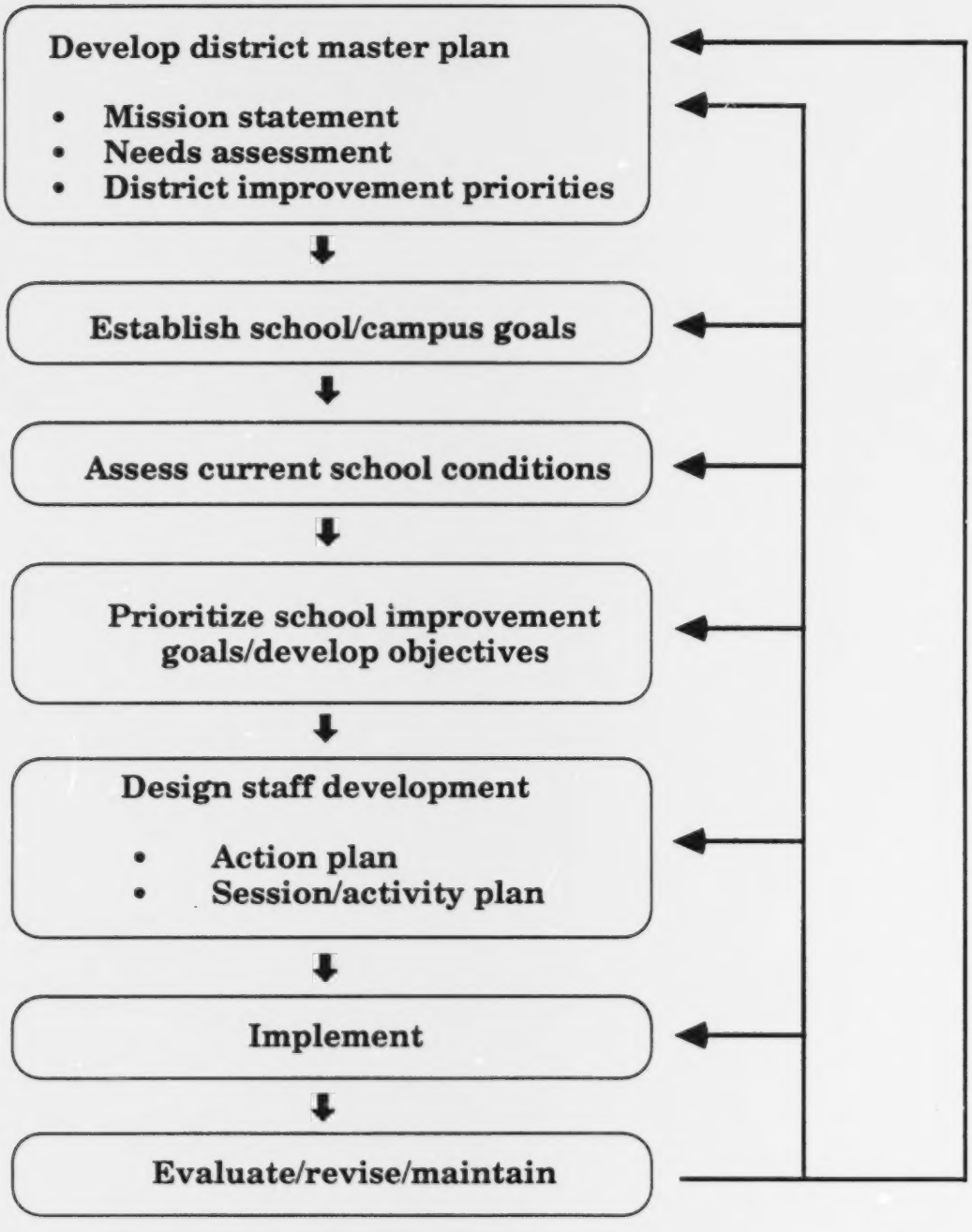


Figure 1

effort, and measuring progress during interim periods. Program evaluation is viewed as an essential element of long-term maintenance of the school improvement effort and the evaluation information is incorporated into the campus and district-wide planning process for ongoing review and program refinement.

A survey of the literature indicates that effective staff development programs include certain key characteristics: (1) They relate directly to the participants' work context; (2) They incorporate principles of adult learning; (3) They include orientation to training objectives and approaches; and (4) They focus on the concepts and knowledge base underlying specific instructional strategies (Harris, 1985; Joyce & Showers, 1988; Lawson & Torres, 1988; Vaughan, Boethel, Hoover, Lawson & Torres, 1989). The process is continuous, planned, sequential and based on best practice research and information. Follow-up activities are critical to sustaining training effects.

The key elements of the process used to plan staff development activities to meet particular goals include: (1) determination of objectives; (2) selection and design; (3) orientation; (4) training; (5) implementation; and (6) evaluation.

1. **Determination of Objectives.** Staff development objectives stem from a systematic needs assessment process and relate to campus and district goals. The campus and district need to have clearly specified goals for staff development outcomes. The objectives, purposes and approaches of training activities need to match these goals. When the content of staff development matches the goals of the campus and district, the training is easily translated into the classroom.

2. **Selection and design.** Campus teachers and administrators are involved in the selection of staff development activities and design of programs related to campus improvement goals. Participants' knowledge and skills are assessed and incorporated into the program. Varied activities to promote individual and group learning are used. Staff development activities are multiple and integrated, not one-shot or episodic sessions focused on discrete topics.

3. **Orientation.** Participants need a thorough orientation to the purpose and content of staff development activities. That orientation should include the intent and long-term direction of the strategies or program presented; a rationale and background information, including relevant research-based information; the resource and logistical requirements of the new program or approach; and an evaluation of participants' readiness for the materials to be presented.

4. **Training.** The content of the training should be research based, and the activities should be appropriate to the needs of the participants and to the magnitude of the changes expected as a result of the training. The methods used in training activities should be based on adult learning theory.

5. **Implementation.**

- **Collaboration.** The staff development process should include multiple opportunities for collaboration among school staff on an ongoing basis. Collaborative activities may include information sharing, observing, mentoring, peer coaching, and additional planning and revisions.

- **Practice/sharing.** Opportunities for practice and information sharing need to be provided, both within training sessions and within the classroom and campus environment.

- **Follow-up assistance.** Staff development providers, whether internal school staff or external consultants, need to be available for follow-up support and assistance between training sessions.

6. **Evaluation.** An ongoing program evaluation gathers information from participants and others as appropriate. Moreover, formal and informal evaluation measures are readily available to monitor short-term as well as long-term efforts. Evaluation results are used to plan future staff development and assess accomplishment of goals.

## III. Selecting Staff Development Providers

Recognizing the need for staff development and understanding the basic process for designing the training may not be difficult tasks; however, finding qualified and effective staff development providers may be quite difficult (Shenson, 1990). Thus, there are other key matters school educators must address in addition to the school improvement process and the design of staff development activities. Educators must concern themselves with the "how to" and "why" in selecting certain staff development providers.

Staff development providers may be found within your school district or in neighboring districts. Your state education agency and intermediate units may offer the service you need. However, what if your school has exhausted its district and state resources and must select an outside staff development provider? Faculty from college and university departments of education are often called on by school districts, but other departments and special centers should also be considered, especially for content information for particular subjects such as mathematics, history, geography, and the various sciences. Orlich (1989) suggests that community college faculty are often overlooked and are usually well prepared in specific subject areas. For example, he tells about an earth science instructor who conducts short intensive courses for district teachers who lack formal earth science preparation. Other sources for training consultants a school may want to consider include:

- professional organizations that have staff members with experience in various education-related areas,
- federal, state, and community agencies providing education and child related services,
- long-term projects, usually federally funded, where the staff members have developed expertise in certain areas,
- privately held consulting companies, usually specializing in some particular aspect of education such as teaching models or reading programs,
- the education component of area museums,
- local business persons with special expertise.

To prepare for the process of selecting an external training consultant and evaluating the services provided, the following key questions should be addressed:

- Are the needs and objectives of your staff development program clearly defined?
- Is the training episodic or systematic?
- Why should you hire an external staff development provider?
- Whom should you select?
- How do you evaluate the services of the staff development provider?
- How do you reach a clear and concise agreement regarding the training consultant's role?

### Are the Needs and Objectives of You Staff Development Program Clearly Defined?

There are certain key questions or factors that must be addressed before you decide to conduct a search for staff development providers or consultants. First, what are your training needs and objectives? Are they well defined? How were they selected? Did the objectives generate from a needs assessment done by district and campus staff?

The training must be designed to meet staff development needs and solve problems. One test you can use with external consultants is to ask what objectives they have in mind for your program. Ideally, their response should indicate a willingness and an ability to focus on what is needed and defined by your campus and district improvement plans, rather than on what they have available. Shenson (1990) summarized this best when he said: "Good analysis, good thinking, and good planning are the best ways to ensure that you are going to get a qualified consultant" (p. 35).

### Is the Training Episodic or Systematic?

Is the training provided by the consultant episodic or a systematic series of training sessions that requires on-going assistance as well as follow-up sessions? Once the initial training is provided, will you have everything you need to keep the program functioning? Are you buying the rights to use the materials (e.g., necessary instructor guides, visual aids, handouts, etc.) that are an integral part of the program? Is the training program designed in such a way that staff members are able to implement it? Will you always have to rely on the consultant to provide answers to your questions and concerns? Robert W. Pike, an authority on training and author of *Creative*

*Training Techniques*, suggests that while there may not be right answers to these questions, the educators in charge of staff development should know what the answers are (1989).

**Why Should You Hire an External Staff Development Provider?**

Your consultant should be selected to address the needs stated on campus staff development plans and assessments. An external provider may be necessary to meet the staff needs because you do not have the expertise or materials available within your district. You may need information or skills provided by businesses, community members, or agencies dealing with the health and welfare of students.

Ask yourself these questions: Does this consultant provide services that meet our needs and have the qualities we are looking for? Do the consultant's services and expertise focus on our campus/district needs, rather than on what is prepackaged and available? If the consultant is interested in helping you address your training needs, a prepackaged agenda and materials should be revised to address identified needs. Teachers would much rather listen to something relative to an identified need rather than a prepackaged session that was successful somewhere else. You should hire the consultant whose background, expertise, and training provide the best match with the needs of your campus or district improvement plan. Keeping local campus and district staff needs and objectives in mind is a necessity.

**Whom Should You Select?**

There are a number of basic questions to ask before you decide to select a particular consultant to provide training for your staff. Does the consultant possess the skills, qualifications and background training to meet your identified needs? What have other teachers and school districts said about the workshops and materials? Are the methodology and techniques of presentation varied and appropriate? Do they include multimedia presentations, lecturing, active group involvement and handouts? Does the consultant offer follow-up training based on your needs?

Howard L. Shenson (1990), in his book *How to Select and Manage Consultants,* suggests a brief yet excellent checklist to consider when selecting consultants. Shenson (1990) suggests you follow these steps during the selection process:

1. Conduct a personal, face-to-face interview.

2. Ask essential questions to establish the consultant's qualifications:
   a. What does the consultant regard as your principal need or problem?
   b. What can he or she offer you that competitors cannot provide?
   c. How will evaluation of success take place?
   d. Will the consultant work on a performance basis?
   e. What experience does the consultant have working with organizations similar to yours, or other organizations in the industry or field?
   f. What experience does he or she have in working with needs and problems similar to yours?
   g. Who are the consultant's references?

3. Discuss with the consultant the desired outcomes and expectations of the consultation.

4. Establish with the consultant measurable objectives for the consultation.

5. Discuss financial arrangements and contractual terms and conditions.

6. Assess your own fears - fear of consultant incompetence, continuing dependency - lack of managerial control, excessive fee, time availability, evidence of failure, disclosure of proprietary information, improper diagnosis/needs analysis, lack of impartiality - with the consultant, determining if they are increased or alleviated.

7. Alleviate the consultant's potential fears.

8. Check references.

9. Shop around. Do not hire the first consultant who seems to meet your needs without evaluating the competition.

Reprinted by permission of the publisher, from *How to Select and Manage Consultants* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, D. C. Heath & Company, copyright, 1990, Howard L. Shenson).

## How do You Evaluate the Services of the Staff Development Provider?

The degree of care with which you evaluate the suitability and the capability of the consultant is a determining factor in satisfaction with the results achieved from the staff development activities (Shenson, 1990). You should consistently evaluate progress in your staff development plan, reviewing the training results and the consultants's presentations to decide on modifications or revisions that may be needed. Taking the time and effort to evaluate the qualifications, capability, and suitability of the consultant as well as using the results of careful staff development assessment can be valuable in measuring the progress of the staff development activities.

Evaluation of staff development must occur on two levels. Attainment of both the objectives of the training sessions and the staff development goals must be measured. Training sessions are relatively easy to evaluate while the evaluation of the implementation of a desired new practice can be a lengthy and complex process. Questions that should be answered about training sessions include:

- Were activities varied and appropriate to the content of the training and adult learning styles?
- Were activities experiential whenever possible?
- Were the content presented and the methods used adequate to change behaviors?
- Did the consultant present the training in a way that promoted positive attitudes and enthusiasm?
- Were interactions with participants adequate in number and quality?
- Did the consultant make needed adaptations for local applicability?

The ultimate evaluation of training activities is that of the implementation and effectiveness of desired new practices. Although this evaluation process is beyond the scope of these guidelines, questions should be raised and answered regarding the ease of implementation of new practices, the adequacy of supporting materials provided, the alleviation of teacher concerns, the availability of follow-up assistance, and the effect of new practices.

**How do you achieve a clear and concise agreement regarding the training consultants role?**

The initial consideration in negotiating with a consultant occurs prior to any contact with the consultant. This involves answering the questions presented above and includes the development of a staff development plan complete with measurable goals. Clear goals and adequate needs assessment data are critical to being able to communicate training needs to a potential external consultant. The consultant should exhibit interest in the local situation including needs assessment data and should be obviously concerned about the application of training presented. Administrators, other educators, and the consultant should be clear on changes in the system that need to be made in order for application to take place. The availability of the consultant for follow-up and needed adaptations should be a consideration from the beginning of negotiations. If the school and consultant agree that follow-up will not be part of their agreement, then a cadre of administrators or faculty members should be groomed for providing leadership during the implementation process. Another consideration is the need for pretraining for administrators and other school leaders.

Once all the aspects of the training have been discussed, a written agreement should be developed. Although a school district may have a standard contract for external consultants, care should be taken to assure that all considerations regarding the staff development effort are in writing. The content of the written agreement should include the following categories: (1) the perceived problem, (2) the objectives for the training, (3) the consultant's role, (4) the session/activity design, (5) the support and involvement of administration and staff, (6) a time schedule, and (7) evaluation procedures.

## Summary

In summary, staff development provided by an external consultant should fit into a coherent overall plan and should not be considered an add-on or extra training component. Careful attention to the preliminary planning process, including needs assessment and goal setting, is essential. Although a one-time use of a training consultant may be appropriate in some situations, adequate follow-up and assistance are necessary components of training for any new practices requiring substantive changes in behavior. Follow-up activities should always be addressed in negotiations even if the external consultant will not be directly involved. Evaluations should always be directed toward determining if identified needs have been addressed and if staff development goals are being met. A written agreement clarifies expectations and provides protection from misunderstandings for all concerned.

# ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY
# OF SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

## AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

Croughamel, W., & Preston, S. M. (1980). *Planning Education Improvement*. Atlanta: The Georgia Department of Education.

In their handbook the authors provide a *Checklist of Steps for the Needs Assessment Process*, a basic six-step process for conducting effective needs assessment. They also provide the specific tasks administrators must undertake to complete each step of the process. The six steps of the process they examine are: (1) initiate the needs assessment process; (2) conduct perceived needs assessment; (3) verify perceived needs by objective means; (4) determine system-wide priorities; (5) choose need to be addressed by improvement efforts; and (6) conduct a casual analysis of the need to be improved.

Elam, S.M., Cramer, J., & Brodinsky (1986). *AASA Critical issues reports: Staff development, problems and solutions.* Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators.

The authors, Elam, Cramer and Brodinsky, provide two excellent checklists useful for assessing the effectiveness of staff development programs. A *Checklist for Assessing Staff Development Programs*, can be used to assess staff development programs in four key areas: actions related to planning inservice; actions related to administering and maintaining inservice; actions related to instruction and training; and actions related to professional stature of teaching. The checklist is designed for responses as to whether or not a particular action has been accomplished. If the action is not accomplished, it asks for the reason(s) why it is not accomplished.

The second checklist, *Elements of a Successful Staff Development Program*, provides a 13-point refresher course for the success of staff development. The thirteen areas it examines include: (1) involvement in planning; (2) involvement of principals; (3) time for planning; (4) administrative support; (5) expectations; (6) collegiality; (7) continuity; (8) expressed needs; (9) opportunities for practice; (10) opportunity for choice; (11) content; (12) the physical facility; and (13) time of day and season.

Fielding, G.D., & Schalock, H.D. (1985). *Promoting the professional development of teachers and administrators*. Eugene, OR: College of Education, University of Oregon.

The authors, Fielding and Schalock, devote two chapters of guidelines for

district administrators (Chapter 6) and building principals (Chapter 7), which can be used to design and manage effective staff development programs.

Chapter 6, titled *Guidelines for District Administrators,* provides a set of seven general guidelines that superintendents or other central office personnel can follow in fostering effective professional development programs. Unlike much of the effective schools literature that focuses only on what individual principals do to promote professional development in their schools, this set of guidelines suggests that superintendents and other district administrators perform a variety of essential functions to foster successful staff development. The seven guidelines proposed are: (1) establishing priorities; (2) developing designs; (3) clarifying roles and responsibilities; (4) providing support; (5) monitoring progress; (6) evaluating effects; and (7) comparing costs and benefits.

Chapter 7, titled *Guidelines for Principals*, provides a general set of guidelines for building-level administrators, specifically principals, to use in designing and managing professional development programs, keeping in mind that what happens at this level is greatly influenced by priorities and policies established by the district-level administrators. In this chapter, the authors have drawn upon a variety of studies and other activities that demonstrate the critical role principals play in promoting teachers' professional development. They suggest that principals need to make two things clear: their expectations for teachers' involvement in inservice programs and the kind of program-related support and supervision they intend to provide. The chapter reviews the following six functions that principals need to carry out to foster effective professional development programs: set clear expectations for both teacher involvement and their own involvement; utilize effectively the talents of lead teachers; establish collaborative structures to foster teachers' professional interaction; differentiate between supervision intended to fulfill administrative requirements, promote individual growth, and support program implementation or improvement; guard against premature evaluations of professional development programs; and regularly exchange ideas with other principals in the district or area who are involved with similar programs.

Harris, B. M. (1989). *In-Service Education for Staff Development.* Boston: Allen & Bacon, 203.

Ben Harris outlines a *Checklist for Reviewing an In-Service Education Program Plan*, which serves as a guide in developing effective staff

development programs in most school districts, regardless of size. The A-Z checklist consists of twenty-six items (letters in the alphabet) which can serve as a guide in reviewing an in-service education program plan. Major areas include: goal specification; strategy; design; implementation; evaluation; and materials. A second checklist, *Evaluative Criteria for an In-Service Education Program Plan*, provides an in-depth description of each of the items on this evaluation instrument.

National Staff Development Council (no date). *Characteristics of Effective Staff Development Activities.* Oxford, OH: author.

The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) outlines a set of twenty key characteristics of effective staff development activities. The twenty characteristics include: (1) involvement in planning objectives; (2) active building principal involvement; (3) time for planning; (4) district administrative support; (5) expectations; (6) opportunity for sharing; (7) continuity; (8) expressed needs; (9) opportunity for follow-up; (10) opportunity for practice; (11) active involvement; (12) opportunity for choice; (13) building on strengths; (14) content; (15) the presenter; (16) individualization; (17) number of participants; (18) the learning environment; (19) the physical facility; and (20) time of day and season.

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (1990). *Improving School and Classroom Productivity: Training Modules to Facilitate School Improvement.* Austin, TX: author.

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) produced a set of modules that are intended to help schools use research-based practice in their own school improvement process. The modules are designed for administrators or staff development practitioners. Each module contains five major sections: (1) participant's notebook; (2) trainer's notebook; (3) trainer's script; (4) blackline masters for transparencies; and (5) other accessories unique to each module. The following modules are available through SEDL: Parent Involvement, Data Interpretation, Student Motivation, School Improvement Process-Level I, School Improvement Process-Level II, Curriculum Alignment, Communication, Climate/Culture, Team Building, School Improvement for School Boards and School Improvement for Superintendents.

Walsh, J. (1988). *Sharpening the focus.* Frankfort, KY: Kentucky Academy for School Executives.

Jackie Walsh designed an 8-Part Target Plan for developing effective workshops. It is an excellent guide or checklist that can be used by administrators in planning effective staff development programs for their school districts. The eight targets include: (1) assessing the personal leadership and training style; (2) recognizing and applying principles of adult learning or andragogy; (3) identifying participant needs and expectations; (4) establishing a positive learning climate; (5) organizing and managing training events; (6) selecting appropriate presentation methods and fine-tuning presentation skills; (7) building participant involvement; and (8) evaluating participant progress and workshop effectiveness.

Wood, F.H. & Kleine, P.F. (1988). Rural staff development research: A small step forward. *Journal of Staff Development, 9*(4), 2-7.

In this article, Wood and Kleine review research findings which should help staff developers when planning and implementing rural inservice training for teachers and administrators. They also provide guidelines for effective practices. They conclude that research on rural staff development must be increased and become more systematic and focused. The authors outline a list of ten effective practices that can be used as a guide in designing rural staff development programs: (1) inservice training should focus on school-based improvements in professional practices; (2) the development of participant ownership and participation in inservice can be developed through involvement of teachers and administrators in the selection of goals and program changes that serve as a basis for staff development; (3) teachers and administrators should work together to plan inservice training programs; (4) staff development planning and training should be based on careful, systematic needs assessment; (5) guided practice and experiential learning (where participants in inservice education can try their own behavior and techniques, exchange ideas, and obtain helpful feedback) can be used to increase the chances of success in the training stage; (6) the use of peer instructors with expertise as staff development leaders promotes achievement of inservice objectives; (7) follow-up assistance when participants return to their classrooms and begin to implement what they have learned during training promotes implementation and transfer of learning; (8) inservice participants should have an opportunity to control part of what or how they learn; (9) inservice that emphasizes self-instruction by teachers as part of the process has a stronger record of success; and (10) principals should

participate in staff development programs with their teachers. The authors' review of the research literature also provided support for the five-stage process of staff development reported in the 1981 ASCD Yearbook, the RPTIM Model (readiness, planning,training, implementation and maintenance stages of staff development).

Wood, F.H. & Thompson, S.R. (1980). Guidelines for Better Staff Development. *Educational Leadership, 37*(5), 374-378.

A general set of guidelines to consider in planning effective staff development programs is outlined in this periodical. Research tells us that adults learn best through concrete experiences where social interaction takes place. The authors review eleven guides or facts about what adult learning trainers need to be aware of in order to plan and conduct effective inservice education programs. Finally, they suggest the following six guides to consider when planning staff development programs: (1) include more participant control over the "what" and "how' of learning; (2) focus on job related tasks that the participants consider real and important; (3) provide choices and alternatives that accommodate the differences among participants; (4) include opportunities for participants in inservice training to practice what they are to learn in simulated and real work settings as part of their training; (5) encourage the learners to work in small groups and to learn from each other; and (6) reduce the use and threat of external judgements from one's superior by allowing peer-participants to give each other feedback concerning performance and areas of needed improvement.

# DIRECTORY OF

# RURAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

# AND PROGRAMS

## DIRECTORY OF RURAL SERVICE PROVIDERS AND PROGRAMS

### Directory Overview

The directory presents two major sections of information:

Section One: Sampling of Rural Service Providers

Section Two: Promising Programs in Rural Schools in the Southwestern Region

Rural schools in each of the five states served by SEDL have access to various services and assistance from a number of state and national service providers. Section One contains a brief annotated description of rural service providers in each of the states in the Southwestern Region as well as regional and national providers. It includes the purpose, description, rural relevance, and the contact information. In most cases, services are extended to all schools, regardless of classification -- rural or metropolitan. Rural educators may want to contact these organizations about staff development needs. In addition, state education agencies and intermediate units provide information, services and technical assistance. Many of these resources have been selected from the "*Directory of Organizations and Programs in Rural Education*" produced by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools and the National Rural Education Association. This document is available from ERIC/CRESS at the Appalachian Educational Laboratory, P. O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325, or call (800) 624-9120 for ordering information.

Section Two includes a descriptive overview of twenty-two exemplary rural school programs using a systematic staff development process for rural school improvement. Systematic staff development for rural school improvement is a continuous, planned, sequential process used to design inservice programs relevant to the district's priority school improvement goals. The twenty-two programs presented are participants in SEDL's Rural, Small Schools Initiative Exemplary Sites Program in the Southwestern Region. The schools were nominated by staff development providers and other interested professionals in the region. These schools were selected as exemplary sites, demonstrating the process of school improvement through systematic staff development. They are positive proof of the effectiveness of systematic staff development in attaining school improvement goals. Rural educators may want to contact these schools for more information about these school improvement programs and the resources that were selected and used during the staff development process.

| Section One: | Sampling of Rural Service Providers | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| Part 1: | Councils on Economic Development | 23 |
| Part 2: | State Affiliates of the Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (ASCD) | 25 |
| Part 3: | National Diffusion Network (NDN) State Facilitators | 27 |
| Part 4: | State Data Centers | 29 |
| Part 5: | Cooperative Extension System Centers | 30 |
| Part 6: | Multi-State Providers of Technology | 32 |
| Part 7: | Project LEAD State Centers | 34 |
| Part 8: | Statewide and Regional Associations, Programs and Centers | 36 |
| Part 9: | Sampling of Other State Service Providers | 38 |
| Part 10: | National Associations and Networks | 56 |
| Part 11: | National Centers and Clearinghouses | 61 |
| Part 12: | Rural Journals and Periodicals | 65 |

| Section Two: | Promising Programs in Rural Schools in the Southwestern Region | 68 |
|---|---|---|
| Arkansas | *ATLAS Project* | |
| | Eudora Public Schools | 69 |
| | Fouke Public Schools | 70 |
| | Perryville Public Schools | 71 |
| | *School Improvement Based on Effective Schools Research* | |
| | Lonoke Public Schools | 73 |
| Louisiana | *Student Academic Performance* | |
| | Bayou L'Ourse Primary School, Assumption Parish | 75 |
| | *Hands-On-Science* | |
| | Madisonville Elementary School, St. Tammany Parish | 76 |
| | *Math Improvement Effort* | |
| | Lee Road Junior High, St. Tammany Parish | 78 |
| | *Science is Something* | |
| | Mandeville Middle School, St. Tammany Parish | 80 |
| | *Integrated Pre-School Program* | |
| | West Feliciana Parish School Board, W. Feliciana Parish Schools | 82 |

| | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| **New Mexico** | *Restructuring for Student Achievement* | |
| | Bernalillo Public Schools | 84 |
| | *Environmental Education* | |
| | Chichiltah-Jones Ranch School | 86 |
| | *Staff Development for Improved Instruction and Learning* | |
| | Indian Hills Elementary School, Gallup-McKinley County School District | 88 |
| **Oklahoma** | *Program for Effective Teaching (PET)* | |
| | El Reno Public Schools | 90 |
| | *Kingston Public School Staff Development Plan* | |
| | Kingston Public Schools | 92 |
| | *Little Axe Effective Schools Program* | |
| | Little Axe Public Schools | 94 |
| | *Walters Elementary Integrated Learning Approach* | |
| | Walters Elementary School | 96 |
| **Texas** | *Life Management Skills for Migrant Students* | |
| | The Central Stream Migrant Education Program Development Center, Texas A&I University, Kingsville, Texas | 98 |
| | *San Diego I.S.D. Follow-Through Plan* | |
| | San Diego Independent School District | 99 |
| | *Prescription Learning* | |
| | Tomball Independent School District | 101 |
| | *Learning to Love Computers* | |
| | Etoile Independent School District | 103 |
| | *Texas Mathematics Staff Development Program* | |
| | Region XVI Education Service Center | 105 |
| | *Benavidez Elementary Follow-Through Program* | |
| | Benavidez Independent School District | 107 |
| | *Curriculum Development in Energy Education Project (C-DEEP)* | |
| | Seguin Independent School District | 109 |
| | *Willis I.S.D. Staff Development Plan* | |
| | Willis Independent School District | 111 |

# SECTION ONE

# SAMPLING OF RURAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

## COUNCILS ON ECONOMIC EDUCATION

PURPOSE: To encourage the study of economics at all educational levels and by all groups of citizens.

DESCRIPTION:

The council assists educators in integrating economics systematically into the total school curriculum by developing a variety of curricular materials and educator training across grade levels. It designs and supports various economic education initiatives through material and training development, publication of information, and presentation of workshops and conferences. Efforts to increase economic literacy of the young people in the state also include public information papers, educator and school recognition awards and programs, as well as other activities.

RURAL FOCUS:

Although no separate rural focus is present in the efforts of the council, many rural schools and educators benefit from its activities. Agriculture, business, government, labor and professions serve on the council board representing all major sectors of the economy. Local educators are involved in the planning and development of programs to address special community needs.

**Arkansas State Council on Economic Education**
#4 State Capitol Mall, Room 203B
Little, Rock, AR 72201
501-682-4230

**Louisiana Council on Economic Education**
Louisiana State University
217 Energy Center
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
504-388-8611

**New Mexico Council on Economic Education**
University of New Mexico, Department of Curriculum & Instruction
Mesa Vista Hall
Albuquerque, NM 87131
505-272-4114

**Oklahoma Council on Economic Education**
Oklahoma State University
112 College of Business Administration
Stillwater, OK 74078
405-624-5204

**Texas Council on Economic Education**
University of Houston - Clear Lake
2700 Bay Area Boulevard
Houston, TX 77058
713-488-9537

Texas has thirteen regional affiliates throughout the state working in tandem on the effort.

NATIONAL:
**Joint Council on Economic Education**
432 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016
212-685-5499

## STATE AFFILIATES OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT (ASCD)

PURPOSE: Affiliates of the National Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development promote the national focus in each state to strengthen school leadership at all grade levels, primarily for curriculum, instruction, and supervision purposes.

DESCRIPTION:

In addition to promoting the national focus, some state affiliates have been involved in the training of trainers in Tactics for Thinking, an ASCD program designed to promote higher order thinking skills. Consultant as well as materials fee are charged for this service available to schools and educational service centers.

RURAL FOCUS:

There is currently no special rural focus in any of the state affiliates, however, many rural school supervisors and administrators as members participate in activities and conferences.

**Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development**
Sheridan Public Schools
400 N. Rock Street
Sheridan, Arkansas 72150
501-942-3135

**Louisiana Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development**
5913 Milne Boulevard
New Orleans, Louisiana 70125
504-483-6428

**New Mexico Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development**
c/o Texas Tech University
3803 94th Place
Lubbock, TX 79423
806-798-3320

**Oklahoma Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development**
c/o Office of the Superintendent
Oklahoma State Department of Education
2500 North Lincoln Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-4599
405-521-2711

**Texas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development**
1101 Trinity
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 472-3403

**National Office:**

Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (ASCD)
1250 North Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-1403
(703) 549-9110

## NATIONAL DIFFUSION NETWORK (NDN) STATE FACILITATORS

PURPOSE: The National Diffusion Network (NDN) is a system that promotes the adoption of proven education programs developed by public and private schools, colleges, and other institutions. The National Diffusion Network is a federally funded dissemination system that helps public and private schools, colleges, and other educational institutions improve by sharing successful education programs, products, and processes. To support and encourage this dissemination system, the U. S. Department of Education awards dissemination grants to four types of projects: (1) Developer Demonstrator Projects, (2) Dissemination Process Projects, (3) State Facilitators, and (4) Private School Facilitators. Projects disseminated by the NDN are developed locally, and tried and field tested with students and teachers. Every project has demonstrated its effectiveness to the Department of Education's Program Effectiveness Panel. This means that the projects were effective at their development sites and also, that they can be used successfully at other sites. The following list provides contact information for each NDN State Facilitator in the Southwestern Region.

DESCRIPTION:

The State Facilitator makes grants available to education service centers to assist schools with the training and implementation of NDN programs. The Facilitator promotes awareness of exemplary programs through presentations at state conferences and as well as other activities.

RURAL FOCUS:

There is no distinction between rural and urban schools for the services provided by NDN. However, effective rural programs are identified for replication in the description of programs provided by NDN. Many rural schools participate, in replication of NDN programs, adapting the programs to meet their unique needs.

**Arkansas Facilitator Center**
National Diffusion Network

**Arkansas Department of Education**
Arch Ford Building
State Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-682-4568

**Louisiana National Diffusion Network Facilitator**
Louisiana State Department of Education
ESEA Title IV Bureau Office
P. O. Box 44064
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
504-342-3424

**New Mexico National Diffusion Network Facilitator**
University of New Mexico, College of Education
Department of Educational Foundations
Onate Hall, Room 223
Albuquerque, NM 87131
505-277-5204

**Oklahoma Facilitator Center**
101 W. Broadway
Cushing, Oklahoma 74023
918-225-4711

**Texas NDN State Facilitator Center**
Education Service Center, Region VI
3332 Montgomery Road
Huntsville, Texas 77340-6499
409-295-9161

## STATE DATA CENTERS

If there is a need for rural information, a good place to start is your State Data Center. Every state has one. A network of organizations participating in the State Data Center (SDC) program makes information about small towns and rural areas easily available. The program provides planning and research information to small town mayors, state and local agencies, businesses, institutions of higher education, and individuals. Much of the information is free of charge, just by asking. The information is compiled from the decennial census of population and housing, the fine-year censuses of agriculture, business and manufacturers, and from other federal and state sources. Addresses and contact persons for the five states in the Southwestern region are listed below.

**Center for Information Services**
University of Arkansas
2801 S. University
Little Rock, AR 72204
(501) 371-1973

**State Planning Office**
Department of Administration
P. O. Box 94095
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
(504) 342-7410

**Economic Development & Tourism Development**
1100 St. Francis Dr.
Santa Fe, NM 87503
(505) 827-0276

**Department of Commerce**
5 Broadway Executive Park
6601 Broadway Extension
Oklahoma City, OK 73116-8214
(405) 843-9770

**Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations**
Sam Houston Bldg.
201 E. 14th Street
Austin, TX 78711
(512) 463-1812

Source: Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools and National Rural Education Association (1990). *Directory of Organizations and Programs in Rural Education*. Charleston, WV: ERIC/CRESS at the Appalachia Educational Laboratory.

## COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM CENTERS

The Cooperative Extension System (CES) is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the state Land Grant Universities, and county governments. It has offices in nearly every county in the United States. Extension agents throughout the country help local communities assess economic development options, build community development plans, initiate specific development projects, and train local citizens in community organizing and leadership skills. Entries of state and regional CES offices and contact persons in the Southwestern region follow.

**Community Development**
Cooperative Extension Service
University of Arkansas
P. O. Box 391
Little Rock, AR 72203
(501) 373-2594

**1890 Agricultural Programs**
P. O. Box 82
University of Arkansas
Pine Bluffs, AR 71601
(501) 541-6868

**Cooperative Extension Service**
Louisiana State University
Knapp Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
(504) 388-2145

**1890 Extension Programs**
P. O. Box 10010
Southern Branch Post Office
Baton Rouge, LA 70813
(504) 771-2242

Source: Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools and National Rural Education Association (1990). *Directory of Organizations and Programs in Rural Education*. Charleston, WV: ERIC/CRESS at the Appalachia Educational Laboratory.

**Agriculture and Resource Development**
Cooperative Extension Service
New Mexico State University
Box 3AE
Las Cruces, NM 88001
(505) 646-1541

**Agriculture and Rural Development**
Cooperative Extension Service
Oklahoma State University
243 Ag Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078-0486
(405) 624-6550

**Rural Development and Agriculture**
1890 Extension
Cooperative Extension Program
P. O. Box 970
Langston, OK 73050
(405) 466-2387

**Community Development**
Agricultural Extension Service
Texas A & M University
Ag. Bldg. Room 12
College Station, TX 77843-2124
(409) 845-4445

**1890 Extension Program**
Prairie View A & M University
Drawer B
Prairie View, TX 77445
(713) 857-4051

## MULTI-STATE PROVIDERS OF TECHNOLOGY

PURPOSE: To provide various satellite broadcasting of educational television offerings to students, teachers, educators, and others via long-distance technology.

DESCRIPTION:

These networks are generally collaborative efforts between state departments of education, universities, intermediate educational agencies, and public broadcasting facilities. The technology of distance transmissions via satellite, cable, microwave, and fiber optics extend instructional opportunities to small numbers of students and educators that would not be justifiable, nor affordable otherwise.

RURAL FOCUS:

The extent of use by rural schools and the production of services for them varies with the networks; however, some were designed especially for this audience. Regardless of primary intent, these systems offer extended opportunities for rural schools in the present and for future development.

**Midlands Consortium**
Arts and Sciences Extension
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 749098-0276
405-744-5647

**TI-IN**
TI-IN United Star Network
1000 Central Parkway North, Suite 190-B
San Antonio, TX 78232
512-492-3900

**SERC/AR**
Arkansas Department of Education
4 State Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201-1071
501-682-4474

**SERC/LA**
Louisiana Public Broadcasting
7860 Anselmo Lane
Baton Rouge, LA 70810-1199
504-767-5660

**SERC/TX**
Instructional Television Department
KLRU - TV 18
P. O. Box 7158
Austin, TX 78713
512-471-4811

## LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION DEVELOPMENT (LEAD) PROGRAM

PURPOSE: To provide grants for the operations of school leadership training and technical assistance centers.

DESCRIPTION:

Project Lead assists administrative organizations in setting up conferences, training workshops, presentations, and in gathering and disseminating research. Each project Lead Center offers a program to improve the leadership skills of school administrators across the state. Programs may address both aspiring and practicing administrators and are characterized by: research-based conceptualizations of the administrators leadership roles and career stages; introduction or extension of administrator assessment processes and provision of corresponding skill development opportunities and resources; and experiential components such as principals' centers, mentoring, internships, peer coaching or support groups and school improvement models.

RURAL FOCUS:

Project Lead does work with administrators from rural, small schools, often providing direct assistance.

**Arkansas Project Lead**
Arkansas State Department of Education
4 Capitol Mall, R 404A
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
501-682-4556

**Louisiana Project Lead**
EDAS College of Education
Louisiana State University
101 Peabody Hall
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803
504-388-6001

**New Mexico Project Lead**
Department of Educational Administration
College of Education, Main Campus
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131
505-277-3943

**Oklahoma Project Lead**
Professional Development Center
131 S. Flood Avenue
Norman, Oklahoma 73069
614-891-1229

**Texas Project Lead Center**
406 East Eleventh Street
Austin, Texas 78701-2617
512-477-9014

## STATEWIDE AND REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, PROGRAMS AND CENTERS

The following is a listing of statewide and regional associations, programs, and centers in the Southwestern region of the United States.

**Center for Academic Excellence**
College of Education
University of Central Arkansas
Conway, AR 72032
(501) 450-3400

The mission of the Center is to improve education in Arkansas by cooperating and sharing resources with public school districts. The purpose of the Center is to provide, through collaboration, the structure to remedy or mitigate fundamental educational problems and to conduct educational research and evaluation activities and services. The Center provides professional assistance to public school districts in Arkansas wishing to develop projects and programs designed to address local educational needs.

**LaCROSS**
Louisiana Center for Rural or Small Schools
Northeast State University
329 Strauss Hall
Monroe, LA 71209-0230
(318) 342-4079 or 4087

The Louisiana Center for Rural or Small Schools (LaCROSS) seeks to serve the diverse needs of the many rural and small schools in Louisiana and the Arkansas, Mississippi region. Through only a little over one year old, LaCROSS has been involved in assisting schools in researching teacher labor markets and in developing teacher recruitment materials. At present, LaCROSS is preparing a position paper on teacher recruitment and retention on southern rural and small schools.

**Center for Smaller Schools**
Texas Tech University
College of Education
P. O. Box 4560
Lubbock, TX 79409
(806) 742-2391

The Center seeks to improve educational opportunities for children and youth in small and rural schools by conducting research, providing professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators, and assisting individual or groups of small school districts in long-term efforts to reform their programs and practices. Periodic reports are produced to summarize results of research and development efforts. An annual statewide conference for small school administrators is conducted through the Center, in cooperation with the Texas Association of Community Schools.

**Department of Education**
Texas A & I University
Campus Box 196
Kingsville, TX 78363
(512) 595-3203

The Department of Education has two programs involving rural education. The first is the National Science Foundation Institute for Elementary Teachers in rural elementary schools in South Texas. This institute is designed to assist teachers to teach elementary science by using the language arts. The second program, "The Bilingual Connection: Research on Writing and Reading Across the Science Curriculum," is a state-funded research and development activity designed to identify appropriate and effective ways to teach limited-English-proficient elementary students in small, rural schools.

## SAMPLING OF OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS

### ARKANSAS

**ARKANSAS POWER AND LIGHT**
Education/Youth Services

PURPOSE: To provide educational presentations and opportunities

DESCRIPTION:

The Education and Youth Services division of Arkansas Power and Light provide presentations on such intriguing questions as "What is Electricity?" as well as providing presentations which teach children how to work safely with electricity. The Education and Youth Services division provides career opportunity presentations; scholarships to students and grants for teachers are also offered by the Education and Youth Services divisions of Arkansas Power and Light.

RURAL FOCUS:

Although the Education and Youth Services division of Arkansas Power and Light does not have a specific unit targeting small, rural schools, they do try to provide services to any schools showing an interest in these programs.

**Arkansas Power and Light**
Education/Youth Services
P.O. Box 551
Little Rock, AR 72203
501-372-3900

## ARKANSAS EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION COMMISSION
Educational Services Department

PURPOSE: To broadcast educational programs statewide, to provide copies of instructional materials and to enable a more broad-based distribution system by working with 16 media cooperatives in the state of Arkansas.

DESCRIPTION:

The Educational Services Department of the Arkansas Educational Television Commission provides statewide broadcasting of educational programs. Rural schools have access to these broadcasts. The Educational Services Department makes copies of instructional materials upon request. In order to ensure a more broad-based distribution system, they work with the 16 cooperatives in the state.

RURAL FOCUS:

Although no special unit exists within the Arkansas Educational Television Commission which focuses specifically on rural, small schools, they did point out that membership in the Satellite Educational Resources Program, and participation with the Star Schools program does indicate that the goal is to provide services to rural communities.

**Arkansas Educational Television Commission**
350 South Donaghey
Conway, Arkansas 72032
501-682-2386

## ARKANSAS SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL

PURPOSE: To disseminate publications with a major focus on rural, small schools.

DESCRIPTION:

The Arkansas School Study Council disseminates publications for educators and schools.

RURAL FOCUS:

A major focus of the literature is on rural, small schools. For example, the focus on problems which are specific to rural, small schools such as problems with finances and consolidation. The majority of the Arkansas School Study Council's members are from rural/small schools.

**Arkansas School Study Council**
P.O.Box 428
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701
501-575-5112

## UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS CENTER FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

PURPOSE: To address educational problems, conduct educational research and evaluation activities.

DESCRIPTION:

The Center for Academic Excellence at the University of Central Arkansas strives to enable public schools to venture into particular projects or programs designed to address local educational needs by providing professional assistance. No cost need be incurred by the public school requesting assistance.

RURAL FOCUS:

The Center for Academic Excellence indicates that a majority of the schools they work with are, indeed, rural schools. The Center realizes that there are different concerns for urban schools and rural schools. It is the intent, therefore, to customize the work based on the individual school's needs. Within the past few years, the Center for Academic Excellence has worked with 80 rural districts. From May 1988 to May 1989, the Center for Academic Excellence has worked with 18 rural and/or small school districts.

**University of Central Arkansas**
Center for Academic Excellence
Box G, THD 205
Conway, Arkansas 72032-5099
501-450-3400

## WINTHROP ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

PURPOSE: To provide funding for educational projects with an emphasis on economic development and community development.

DESCRIPTION:

The Foundation provides funding for educational projects with an emphasis on economic development. The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation tends to favor funding for local projects which result in improving the living standards and the institutions which serve the community. Funding is provided for special projects, seed money, conferences and seminars, matching funds, technical assistance, consulting services, program-related investments and publications.

RURAL FOCUS:

The Rockefeller Foundation is committed to statewide distribution of grants and offers workshops to assist educators seeking grants. Because so much of Arkansas is rural, many of those who receive grants are rural and/or small schools. The Foundation mentioned that at an "At-Risk Grantees" meeting that was held in June 1989, ten out of eleven of the participants were from rural areas.

**Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation**
308 East Eighth Street
Little Rock, Arkansas 72202

## LOUISIANA

## GRAMBLING MIDDLE MAGNET SCHOOL

PURPOSE: To offer an enriched education program for gifted students.

DESCRIPTION:

Besides educating gifted students, the magnet school has a parent involvement plan to develop improved understandings of the students' school activities. The school also offers an after-school tutorial program to students whose parents are not able to provide this type of help at home.

RURAL FOCUS:

While there is no special service to rural schools, rural students may be enrolled. Rural educators do attend inservice workshops and conferences that are held periodically to address identified needs of students and teachers.

**Grambling Middle Magnet School**
Grambling, LA 71245
318-274-2257

## LOUISIANA SCHOOL'S TELELEARNING PROJECT

PURPOSE: To provide opportunities for students through long distance learning.

DESCRIPTION:

Funded jointly by Louisiana School for Math, Science & the Arts and the Louisiana Board of Elementary & Secondary Education, the project provides advanced academic courses to students in schools throughout the state. Using interactive computer and phone system technology, it transmits instruction in trigonometry, pre-calculus, calculus, comparative government, French II, and survey of the arts.

RURAL FOCUS:

The project targets rural systems without specific programs for gifted/talented students at the secondary level. Participating systems with very small groups of students are networked together, on-line simultaneously, and provided with the opportunities for interaction, individual assistance, and answers to questions.

**Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts**
715 College Avenue
Natchitoches, LA 71457
318-357-3176

## NORTHEAST LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR RURAL AND SMALL SCHOOLS

PURPOSE: To assist rural and small schools.

DESCRIPTION:

The center assists rural, small schools in several ways -- by doing relevant research, by developing plans for special needs such as teacher recruitment and drop-out prevention.

**Northeast Louisiana University Center for Rural and Small Schools**
Northeast Louisiana University
College of Education
Monroe, LA 71209-0200
318-342-4079

## NEW MEXICO

### LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICE
Educational Outreach Office

PURPOSE: To assist in enhancing science and mathematics education in northern New Mexico, to assist the communities of northern New Mexico and to act as a "good neighbor" in the surrounding communities.

DESCRIPTION:

The Los Alamos National Laboratory Educational Outreach program is designed primarily to assist the communities of northern New Mexico in improving both the availability of science and mathematics instruction in schools as well as increasing the quality of science and mathematics instruction. The Educational Outreach program also serves to stimulate interest in science and mathematics among young students. The "Science Beginnings" program is geared towards this goal. The Los Alamos Educational Outreach Lab offers many more programs designed to involve students in the northern New Mexico area in science and mathematics education and to encourage students to work towards careers in science. Community Outreach is an important goal of the Los Alamos Educational Outreach Office. The intent of the community outreach program is to nurture a healthy relationship with the community of Los Alamos, as well as surrounding communities. Programs include: The Volunteer Service Program, where Laboratory employees offer time and services to different organizations; Amigo-Net program "an education/business partnership program designed to facilitate resource sharing"; and The Speakers Bureau, which allows experts in different scientific fields to speak to college and university audiences.

RURAL FOCUS:

The programs mentioned are available to rural, small schools in the northern New Mexico region. Programs are available for pre-college students and teachers. Many different programs are offered. The Los Alamos Educational Outreach office indicates that programs are based upon the needs of the particular community, in relation to national needs and laboratory resources. Within the 1988-89 school year, the Los Alamos National Laboratory provided services to these rural northern counties: Los Alamos, Sandoval, Santa Fe, San Miguel, Mora, Taos and Rio Areba.

**Los Alamos National Laboratory**
Educational Outreach Office
Mail Stop P-278
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545
505-667-1919

## NEW MEXICO MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
New Mexico Rural Science Education Project

PURPOSE: To teach New Mexicans about natural science, to teach educators how to use their natural resources, to teach the public about "caring for their environment, conserving natural resources, dealing with waste management."

DESCRIPTION:

The New Mexico Museum of Natural History provides natural science education to the public. An emphasis is placed on educating the "large Hispanic, Native American, and rural populations." The Museum includes a Naturalist Center which holds 1,300 catalogued natural history specimens. This collection allows for "hands-on learning about New Mexico natural history, as well as serving as a resource for the Museum's Rural Science Education Project." Specimens in the collection are available for use by teachers in project schools. The Museum of Natural History also sponsors research and collections programs carried out by curators of botany, geology,paleontology, and zoology.

RURAL FOCUS:

The Museum of Natural History serves rural and/or small schools. In the 1988-89 school year, the Museum served quite a number of rural, small schools. The Museum also includes a division which focuses on science projects in rural areas.

**New Mexico Museum of Natural History**
New Mexico Rural Science Education Project
P. O. Box 7010
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87194-7010
505-841-8837, 883-4683

## NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY
School of Professional Studies

PURPOSE: To provide training and courses for teachers, administrators and others that may be interested on an off-campus basis.

DESCRIPTION:

The New Mexico Highlands University School of Professional Studies provides courses and training for teachers, administrators and other interested parties. The training and courses can be used towards graduate degrees, for recertification or simply for professional development. The client, the school, need only consult with the University about what type of training or course is desired; the University, then, decides whether or not it will qualify as course credit, workshop credit or institute credit.

RURAL FOCUS:

The New Mexico Highlands University does not specifically target rural schools. Training is provided for any school in any district. A network of administrators from rural areas has been established at the New Mexico Highlands University.

**New Mexico Highlands University**
School of Professional Studies
P. O. Box 12
Las Vegas, New Mexico 87701
505-425-7511 ext. 578, 505-454-0772

## OKLAHOMA

### NORTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Education/Northwest Oklahoma Inservice Cooperative

PURPOSE: The purpose of the Northwest Oklahoma Inservice Cooperative is to work at establishing staff development activities for the entire cooperative.

DESCRIPTION:

The Northwest Oklahoma Inservice Cooperative strives to assist in staff development, working with teachers and helping to identify areas of concern in curriculum matters. Based on needs assessments conducted for co-op members, the inservice cooperative establishes services which it feels particular cooperative members require.

RURAL FOCUS:

The Northwest Oklahoma Inservice Cooperative does not have a special unit dealing with rural, small schools. Many members of the cooperative are rural, small schools, however.

**Northwestern Oklahoma State University**
College of Education/Northwest Oklahoma Inservice Cooperative
Alva, Oklahoma 73717-2749
405-327-1700

## UNIVERSITY OF TULSA

PURPOSE: To provide general educational services including teacher and administrative intern programs, certification for teachers, and recruitment of students into educational fields.

DESCRIPTION:

The University of Tulsa has a variety of programs which are targeted toward rural and/or small schools. These programs include the teacher and administrator intern and certification programs. The administrator intern program places a faculty member in a supervisory role, traveling to visit and assist interns in small schools, both teacher or administrator interns. There is also a program designed especially for recruiting young people from rural, small schools all over the state into the education field. An incentive of 50% reduction in tuition is provided to aid recruitment.

RURAL FOCUS:

While there is not a separate effort or focus on rural education, there has been active participation in the certification program from people from rural, small schools in Kansas and Arkansas. Workshops and conferences are also sponsored by the University of Tulsa, depending on the particular needs and interest of the faculty.

**University of Tulsa**
600 South College
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74104
918-631-2655

## OKLAHOMA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER FOR AT-RISK PROGRAMS

PURPOSE: To assist Oklahoma school districts in working with at-risk students; to evaluate the effectiveness of state-funded at-risk prevention programs.

DESCRIPTION:

The Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center (OTAC) has two major functions: (1) to act as a clearinghouse of information on at-risk students for schools in Oklahoma, and (2) to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of specific state-funded at-risk programs. OTAC collects and disseminates research and resources related to the education of at-risk students. A library of materials related to the at-risk population is maintained as a service to Oklahoma public schools. Research and resources are also disseminated through the Oklahoma Facilitator Center's *Educational Excellence Newsletter*.

RURAL FOCUS:

Since a large proportion of Oklahoma's public schools are in rural or small-community settings, OTAC places an emphasis on the collection of research data and other resources specifically pertaining to the rural at-risk population. Five of the eleven at-risk projects currently being evaluated by OTAC are located in rural districts or cooperatives.

**Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center**
Sylvia Olesen
123 E. Broadway
Cushing, OK 74023
918-225-1882

## TEXAS

### TEXAS RURAL COMMUNITIES (TRC)

PURPOSE: Organized in 1934 under federal statutes addressing economic problems caused by the Depression, the Texas Rural Communities (TRC) continues to assist in the development of rural homesteads as well as to help rural Texans in overcoming economic problems.

DESCRIPTION:

A private, non-profit corporation, TRC provides three types of services to improve the quality of life in rural Texas. These services include: loans for rural development, youth services, higher education and acquisition of farm and ranch real estate; grants to Texas Future Farmers Association for community projects; and undergraduate internships for college students.

**Texas Rural Communities**
314 Highland Mall Blvd., Ste. 103
Austin, Texas 78752
512-458-1016

## TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS (TACS)

PURPOSE: The Texas Association of Community Schools (TACS) is a professional association working for the improvement of instruction in the community schools of the state. It provides opportunities for the professional growth of educators and supports legislation enhancing the effectiveness of community schools.

DESCRIPTION:

Governed by a board of elected officers from its membership, TACS disseminates publications and provides professional and legal assistance. It develops corporate partnerships to enhance and strengthen relationships among schools, the private sector, and communities. In collaboration with the Texas Education Agency and Continuing Education Programs of the University of Texas at Austin, TACS offers an annual summer workshop for educators from community schools. It also holds an annual conference/business meeting for member schools in the fall.

**Texas Association of Community Schools**
1011 San Jacinto Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78701
512-474-1167

## TEXAS RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION

PURPOSE: Assisted by the Texas Electric Cooperatives and the Farmers Home Administration, the Texas Association of Rural Water Corporations (renamed the Texas Rural Water Association) was organized as a non-profit group to assist directors, managers, and operators of each member system in providing efficient service and clean, safe water for their rural customers.

DESCRIPTION:

The Association, governed by a 15-member board of directors elected by the membership, provides field services, legal and lobbying services, communications through the award winning TRWA Magazine, a technical training program for licensure, and liaison services. It services are paid by four sources: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grants, Farmers Home Administration grants, National Rural Water Association service fees and membership fees.

**Texas Rural Water Association**
6300 La Calma Drive
Austin, Texas 78752
512-458-8121

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND NETWORKS

There are a number of national associations and networks with a specific focus on issues pertaining to rural and small communities, including education concerns. While some of the associations and networks deal with education issues in general, many have special interest groups, subgroups, or affiliates that address rural education issues specifically. Entries, along with addresses, phone numbers and contact persons, follow.

**American Association of School Administrators**
Small Schools District Program & Committee
1801 N. Moore Street
Arlington, VA 22209
(202) 528-0700

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) provides an Advisory Committee on Small School Issues for all members. The Committee meets three times a year. A network of key contacts in each AASA state's affiliate links small districts across the nation. The Small Schools District Program and Committee are an effective national voice on issues impacting small school districts. Concerns are brought to the attention of other national organizations, U. S. government officials, and members of Congress.

**Arts and Sciences Teleconferencing Service (ASTS)**
Oklahoma State University
401 LSE
Stillwater, OK 74074
(405) 744-7895

The ASTS at Oklahoma State University currently works with the Oklahoma Department of Education to provide the following courses via satellite: German I & II, Russian, AP Physics, AP Chemistry, AP Calculus, Trigonometry/Analytic Geometry, Applied Economics, AP American Government, and Basic English and Reading (grades 7-8). All courses are taught by Oklahoma State University faculty members in cooperation with a certified teacher at the local classroom. ASTS has also recently initiated a guidance series with the Southwest Region Office of the College Board. The first program in this series is "PSAT/NMSQT Preparation by Satellite."

Source: Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools and National Rural Education Association (1990). *Directory of Organizations and Programs in Rural Education*. Charleston, WV: ERIC/CRESS at the Appalachia Educational Laboratory.

**Communicating for Agriculture**
P. O. Box 677
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
(218) 739-3241

This association is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to the strengthening of rural America. The organization's goals and activities are set by its 40,000 members.

**Consortium of Higher Education and Regional Rural Program Administrators ***
c/o National Rural Education Association
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(303) 491-7022

The consortium of rural education program leaders and directors conduct rural education projects, outreach programs, rural education research, staff development and inservice, and other special events and activities that contribute toward the improvement of practice in rural education. A majority of members are university-based, many of whom direct rural education centers; others are Regional Education Laboratory rural education programs directors. The Consortium meets twice a year--once in the fall, in conjunction with National Rural Education Association annual conference, and once at mid-year.

* Formerly known as Consortium of Higher Education Rural Program Administrators

**Institute for Responsive Education**
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
(615) 353-3309

The Institute for Responsive Education (IRE) is a non-profit public interest organization that promotes parent and citizen involvement in education with a special emphasis on equity issues. Through research, policy development, technical assistance, and advocacy projects, IRE works to encourage citizen participation as an essential ingredient in school improvement. Believing that access to information is indispensable for effective participation, IRE has produced more that 75 reports, handbooks, and other publications since it was founded in 1973.

**National Committee for Citizens in Education**
10840 Little Patuxent Pkwy., Suite 301
Columbia, MD 21044
(301) 997-9300

The National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) is a private, nonprofit, national organization, that seeks to increase parental involvement in the public schools. In addition to a number of publications prepared for parents, NCCE provides free counseling and information on a toll-free Parent Education Help Line (800/638-9675).

**National Rural Development Institute**
Western Washington University
Miller Hall 359
Bellingham, WA 98225
(206) 676-3576

The National Rural Development Institute coordinates the work of the American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES) and the National Rural and Small Schools Consortium (NRSSC). ACRES is an organization dedicated to enhancing special education in rural schools. ACRES' journal, the *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, provides information to rural special educators throughout the nation. The NRSSC specializes in rural and small school concerns and provides information through the *Journal of Rural and Small Schools*. NRSSC membership consists of higher education professionals, direct service providers, administrators, and legislators.

**National Rural Education Association**
Colorado State University
230 Education Bldg.
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(303) 491-7022

Established in 1907, the National Rural Education Association (NREA) is the oldest unified voice for rural education in America. Membership includes: administrators, university faculty, regional and intermediate service agencies and their directors, federal and state-level government administrators, rural teachers, rural school board members, rural PTAs, at-large constituencies, and national organizations. The organizations include, for example, the Regional Educational Laboratories, the National PTA, the National School Boards Association's Rural Forum, the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Education Association's Rural Caucus, and many others. Also included in the membership are national and international university and college libraries. The general goals of the NREA are to further the improvement of educational opportunities for all children in rural areas--with additional attention to

those for whom opportunities have been severely limited in the past--and to serve as the national voice and advocate for rural schools and rural education programs in America. The NREA conducts an annual National Conference; publishes *The Rural Educator*, the *NREA News*, and *The Country Teacher* journal and co-publishes periodic reports, monographs, and resource materials with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools and other agencies.

**Rural and Small District Forum**
National School Boards Association
1680 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(708) 838-6722

The Rural and Small District Forum (RSDF) is a component within the National School Boards Association (NSBA). The RSDF provides programs, services, and benefits for school leaders from districts in rural settings and small towns and intermediate or county units that serve primarily rural populations. The RSDF is advised by an appointed steering committee of rural school board members from all over the country. RSDF has its own annual meeting, special sessions during the NSBA Annual Convention, and board development workshops designed especially for rural board members. Only school systems--not individuals--can belong to the Forum.

**Rural Information Center**
National Agricultural Library
Room 304
Beltsville, MD 20705
(301) 344-2547

The Rural Information Center (RIC) is designed to provide information and referral services to local government officials, business, community organizations, and rural citizens working to maintain the vitality of America's rural areas. The Center combines the technical, subject-matter expertise of the extension service's nationwide educational network with the information specialists and resources of the world's foremost agricultural library.

**Rural Sociological Society**
Department of Sociology-Wilson Hall
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717
(406) 994-5251

The objective of the Rural Sociological Society (RSS) is to promote the study of rural life through research, extension, and education for the purpose of confronting problems, answering questions, increasing opportunities, and thereby improving the quality of life in rural areas. The official journal of the RSS is *Rural Sociology*, a quarterly journal now being received by approximately 1000 members plus 1500 international subscribers. A second quarterly journal, *The Rural Sociologist* (TRS) is also published and distributed to all members. Annual meetings of the RSS provide a forum for new research developments, public policy questions affecting rural life, and application of knowledge in resolving societal problems. Its program includes contributed papers, seminars, and meeting of research and interest groups.

**Special Interest Group on Rural Education of the American Educational Research Association**
Appalachia Educational Laboratory
P. O. Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325
(304) 347-0400

The Special Interest Group (SIG) on Rural Education is one of 97 such SIGs sponsored by the American Educational Research Association (AERA). The group was established in September 1978. The purpose of the group is "to encourage educational research relative to rural schools and people in rural America; and to provide a forum for the dissemination of the findings of such research." To accomplish this purpose, the group holds a business meeting and sponsors several presentations during the AERA annual meeting. A newsletter is published three times a year to keep members informed and involved. Membership is open to both members and nonmembers of AERA who have an interest in promoting research about rural and small schools.

## NATIONAL CENTERS AND CLEARINGHOUSES

There are a number of national centers and clearinghouses with a specific focus on rural issues related to rural educators and communities. While some of these national centers and clearinghouses deal with education issues in general, many have components, division, subgroups, or affiliates that address rural education issues. Entries, along with addresses, phone numbers and contact persons, follow.

**Center for Rural Education & Small Schools**
Kansas State University
College of Education
124 Bluemont Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506
(913) 532-5886

The function of the Center is to: (1) coordinate and conduct research and development activities that address the unique needs of rural and small schools; (2) develop strategies and delivery systems for meeting the educational needs of small schools and rural communities; (3) coordinate and disseminate information about and for rural education; (4) develop and maintain cooperative relationships with state, regional and national agencies, organizations, and institutions with interests in rural education; (5) provide a forum for discussion of issues, practices, and problems by concerned parties; (6) coordinate the establishment of training programs; (7) serve as an advocate for rural education, representing the interests of rural and small schools at the state, regional, and national levels; and (8) provide leadership and serve as an initiator of workshops and seminars that relate to rural education and the needs of rural educators.

Source: Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools and National Rural Education Association (1990). *Directory of Organizations and Programs in Rural Education*. Charleston, WV: ERIC/CRESS at the Appalachia Educational Laboratory.

**Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information**
P. O. Box 1182
Washington, DC 20013
(703) 821-2086

The Clearinghouse serves as a major resource center for the acquisition and dissemination of child abuse and neglect materials. The Clearinghouse is the information component for the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN), which is located within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. At the core of the Clearinghouse is a database that can be obtained as topical bibliographies or custom searches. The database is also directly available to the public through DIALOG Information Services, Inc., a subsidiary of the Knight-Ridder Business Information Services, Inc. The Clearinghouse strives to maintain a timely and comprehensive collection of materials. From its database and many other resources, the Clearinghouse develops publications and services to meet the needs of its users. These products and services, along with materials developed by NCCAN during the past 10 years are listed in our catalog.

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools**
P. O. Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325
(800) 624-9120 (outside WV)
(800) 344-6646 (in WV)
347-0400 (local)

Established in 1966, The Educational Resources Information Center's Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ERIC/CRESS) acquires, processes, and abstracts documents and articles for the ERIC database in the areas of American Indian and Alaska native education, Mexican American education, migrant education, outdoor education, rural education, and small schools. Clearinghouse staff answer questions from clients and conduct free ERIC searches. ERIC/CRESS staff conduct presentations and workshops about the use of the ERIC system. The Clearinghouse also produces a series of publications--guides, monographs, trends and issues papers, and brief syntheses call "Digests"--about topics within its scope of interest. The Clearinghouse disseminates materials about the ERIC system and ERIC/CRESS, including press releases, a newsletter (the *ERIC/CRESS Bulletin*), and lists of free and for-sale publications available from the Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse maintains a network of ERIC/CRESS Partners and is advised by a National Advisory Board representing its scope.

**National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education**
Department of Education
1118 22nd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 467-0867
(800) 321-NCBE

The National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE), funded by the U.S. Department of Education, is a national information center on the education of limited-English-proficient students. NCBE provides reference and referral services on all aspects of bilingual and English as a second language instruction. In addition to these services, NCBE offers free access to its electronic information system. NCBE's bimonthly newsletter, *FORUM*, presents news articles an other current information. NCBE's information system and publications focus on the needs of practitioners, as well as individuals or organizations that work directly with practitioners, in the education of limited-English-proficient persons.

**National Information Center for Children and Youth with Handicaps**
Washington, DC 20013
(703) 893-6061
(800) 999-5599

The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Handicaps (NICHCY) provides free information to assist parents, educators, caregivers, advocates, and others in helping children and youth with disabilities become participating members of the community. NICHCY sources of help, information packets, publications on current issues, and technical assistance to both parent and professional groups.

**National Rural Project**
Western Washington University
Miller Hall 359
Bellingham, WA 98225
(206) 676-3576

The National Rural Project has a grant that allows it to work for rural employment. A network has been developed for people who are looking for employment in rural areas.

**ODPHP National Health Information Center**
P. O. Box 1133
Washington, DC 20013-1133
(800) 336-4797
(301) 565-4167 (in Maryland)

The ODPHP National Health Information Center is a health information referral organization; that puts people with health questions in touch with those organizations that are best able to offer answers. Established in 1979 by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP), the Center's main objectives are to: (1) identify health information resources; (2) channel requests for information to these resources; and (3) dèvelop publications on health-related topics of interest to health professional, the health media, and the general public. The database of health-related organizations, and an information referral system.

**Rural Clearinghouse for Lifelong Education and Development**
Kansas State University
College Court Bldg.
Manhattan, KS 66502
(913) 532-5560

The Rural Clearinghouse for Lifelong Education and Development is a national effort to improve rural access to continued education. Governed by a National Steering Committee, the Clearinghouse serves the complete range of educational providers including colleges and universities, community and economic development corporations. The overriding goal of the Rural Clearinghouse is to improve rural access through a broad range of information and training programs. Specific strategies focus on enhancing educational practice in response to rural needs and include: (1) disseminating effective models for serving rural areas; (2) facilitating the development of effective educational models in response to selected rural problems; (3) providing forums for the exchange of information among professionals from the complete range of educational providers serving rural areas; (4) developing regionally organized and supported networks; and (5) advocating rural needs with educational associations, state and federal policymakers, and other relevant publics.

## RURAL JOURNALS AND PERIODICALS

The following list includes entries of national rural journals and periodicals with special emphasis on rural education and other general rural issues.

**Appalachia**
Appalachian Regional Commission
1666 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20235
(202) 673-7835

**Appalachian Journal**
Appalachian State University
University Hall
Boone, NC 28608
(704) 262-2000

**Comparative Education**
40 Alexandra Road
Epson, Surrey KT17 4BT
United Kingdom

**Comparative Education Review**
119-121 Fulton Hall
University of Missouri
Rolla, MO 65401
(314) 341-4111

**Country Teacher**
National Rural Education Association
230 Education Building
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(303) 491-7022

Source: Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools and National Rural Education Association (1990). *Directory of Organizations and Programs in Rural Education*. Charleston, WV: ERIC/CRESS at the Appalachia Educational Laboratory.

**Human Services in the Rural Environment**
Eastern Washington University
Inland Empire School of Social Work and Human Services
Cheny, WA 99004
(509) 359-6477

**Journal of Rural and Small Schools**
National Rural & Small Schools Consortium
Miller Hall 359
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA 98225
(206) 676-3576

**Journal of Rural Community Psychology**
California School of Professional Psychology
1350 M. Street
Fresno, CA 93721
(209) 486-8420

**Journal of Rural Studies**
Maxwell Pergamon Macmillan Inc.
Maxwell House, Fairview Park
Elmsford, NY 10523
(914) 592-7700

**Research in Rural Education**
College of Education
University of Maine
Orono, ME 04469
(207) 581-2493

**Rural Development Perspectives**
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Economic Research Service
1301 New York Ave., NW-Room 324
Washington, DC 20005-4788
(202) 786-1584

**Rural Educator**
Department of Education
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(303) 491-1101

**Rural Sociology**
Department of Sociology
Wilson Hall
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717
(406) 994-5248

**Rural Special Education Quarterly**
National Rural Development Institute
Miller Hall 359
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA 98225
(207) 676-3576

**The Rural Sociologist**
Department of Sociology
Wilson Hall
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717
(406) 994-5248

# SECTION TWO

# PROMISING PROGRAMS IN RURAL SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## The ATLAS Project
## Advancing Teaching & Learning in Arkansas' Schools

What happens when eight school districts, a university, and a major foundation team up to empower teachers to make needed changes in schools? In the ATLAS project in Arkansas, the results have been both exciting and surprising.

The ATLAS project began in 1988 when the Rockefeller Foundation and the Arkansas International Center of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) recognized the desperate need for improvement in international education in Arkansas and developed a project to help teachers redesign their own curriculum.

The goals of the project were:

1. To improve teachers' knowledge of humanities content.
2. To empower teachers to develop their own curriculum and to promote professional development of other teachers.
3. To promote collaboration among administrators, teachers, university faculty, and community leaders.
4. To promote creative interdisciplinary, intellectual learning experiences.

Eight school districts out of twenty-two applicants were selected to begin the project. The school districts agreed to support teacher efforts at curriculum reform by giving them planning time, release time for training, and flexibility in scheduling. Each participating school selected a team of four teachers to receive special training and to coordinate the curriculum reform project within the schools.

The Rockefeller Foundation provided funding for a teacher institute and follow-up workshops and for curriculum resources for the schools. The Arkansas International Center coordinated the teacher institute and provided the schools with consultation and opportunities to hear and meet international guests.

### Eudora Public Schools

Eudora, located in the Mississippi Delta in the southeastern corner of the state, is quite isolated from international contacts. The Eudora team not only sought to increase students' knowledge of the rest of the world, but also to increase community involvement and support for the school. The Eudora team developed a school-wide country-of-the-month infusion project to increase awareness of other countries. The project focused on Mexico, Japan, Liberia, and France.

Each month, the team began the country-of-the-month project by preparing a large bulletin board and holding an all-school assembly incorporating speakers from the community. Students took a test on the information on the bulletin boards, and the boy and girl with the highest score were crowned at the assembly.

The team members presented English, social studies and language-related activities on the focus country in their classes. Students were encouraged to research and present reports, or to find poems, playlets, or music to present. Because of the extreme shortage of resource materials, the task of researching other countries was quite difficult, but students and teachers displayed remarkable creativity. Band members listened to tapes of music from the country being studied and then composed their own music, adapting their instruments to get the desired sound.

One of the teachers commented that enthusiasm was one of the main results of the project, "Students are more excited and more interested." An English teacher noted that students from other classses begged to be included. They looked forward to the special focus on the country-of-the-month. They loved to search for poems and short stories to present. Students also learned to take initiative. For example, one student worked on her own with the ROTC instructor who had lived in Japan to learn to recite a poem in Japanese. Even though the school does not offer Spanish, several students found Spanish poems to memorize and recite.

One of the most exciting things about the Eudora project is that it reaches students that a traditional curriculum does not. Students who normally do not participate are asking to be part of the group and are taking the initiative to learn. Not only gifted and talented, but also special education students participate.

The team also received good support from the community. The local bank featured a display on the ATLAS teachers and the summer institute; and the project received a grant of $1,000 from Arkansas Power and Light for their resource center.

### Fouke Public Schools

"Last fall when J. came to us," reports Sena Heyn, "he was so shy he would not say anything. He was from a very deprived family and in October his mother told him it was time to quit school." But partly because of the global studies class, he stayed and chose world hunger as a topic for his project.

"When he started his project, J. didn't even know how to use the card catalogue," recalls Sherry Sorell, the media specialist, "but he not only learned to do library research, he learned to use the computer and put together a slide show. I think the ATLAS project has changed this boy's life."

Fouke ATLAS students were selected to make presentations at the State Capitol for the governor's YOUTH 2,000 Program, and J., who had earlier been too shy to talk in class, presented his slide show in front of state legislators. J. is a fairly typical student at Fouke, a community of 506 inhabitants in southwestern Arkansas. The school, which also serves the surrounding rural area, has a K-12 enrollment of 819. The community is all Caucasian, conservative, hard-working, and religious.

The ATLAS team included both elementary and secondary teachers. In the high school, the team focused on the global studies course, in which J. participated. The course included a strong emphasis on helping students learn to think, to work together and to develop leadership skills. The class was taught with an interdisciplinary approach with the music teacher and media specialist contributing to the class.

The media specialist also worked with the team to improve their research skills and to teach them ways of presenting their projects. Each student team had to write and publish an original booklet as part of its project

To provide direct experience with international people, Fouke hosted a group of international students from the UALR Intensive English Language Program and the Guadalajara Dancers.

The global studies class also participated in the AT&T Long Distance Learning Network which gave them an opportunity to communicate with classes from West Germany, Canada and several other countries.

At the elementary school, the entire faculty worked together to enhance their teaching of other countries. Each grade selected a country and was responsible for a presentation to the whole school including costumes, posters, flags, and songs. The music teacher worked with both the elementary and secondary school projects.

The elementary teacher reported, "The project made me more sensitive to other cultures. This definitely influences my teachings, and the ideas I try to impart."

Another result was the quick acceptance of an Indonesian student into the school—the first real international student.

**Perryville Public Schools**

Perryville is a farming and forestry community of approximately 1,000 people located about 45 miles west of Little Rock.

During the first year, Perryville developed a quite intensive program using the ATLAS project as the focus of a plan for restructuring the whole school. The entire ninth grade,

approximately 75 students, had a three-hour block of interdisciplinary humanities which included English, history and a course which integrated knowledge from the other two. The team began the year with intensive training of students in thinking skills and an introduction to cooperative learning strategies.

The team focused on five countries or world regions: the United States, Mexico, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and Africa. With each region, students studied social studies and literature about the region. In the Cultural Survey and Design course, students developed their own projects synthesizing their knowledge from history and literature.

Students reported that for the first time they had the opportunity to compare information from history and literature and to develop their own ideas in-depth. Several students reported that they worked much harder in the class, and all noted that they do much more writing.

The impact of the project was so dramatic that no students dropped out of the ninth grade, and an unusually large number of ninth-grade students are on the honor roll. The librarian reported that even mainstreamed special education students in the project were doing serious research, and the principal noted that he had seen fewer discipline problems in the ninth grade than in other schools.

At the end of the year, one of the teachers summarized the Metropolitan Achievement Tests for participating students, comparing growth in the ninth grade with growth in the eighth grade. The student average national percentile scores improved in all categories with the most dramatic improvements in reading comprehension, math computation, and social studies. Students had also shown some improvement in percentile scores from the seventh to eighth grade, but not as much. The class average for the project students moved from the 72nd to the 85th percentile on total reading, from the 68th to the 73rd on total math, from 70th to the 77th percentile on total language, from the 71st to the 80th percentile on the total basic battery, and from the 74th to the 83rd percentile on the total battery. Improvements were most dramatic for the bottom third of the class.

Contact: Barbara Stanford
Director
The ATLAS Project
University of Arkansas at Little Rock
2801 S. University
Little Rock, AR 72204
(501) 569-3282

Southwest Educational Developement Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## School Improvement Based on Effective Schools Research

Lonoke School District, Lonoke, Arkansas

Lonoke School District is located in a small farming community just east of Little Rock, Arkansas. It serves 1,780 students on four campuses. The student enrollment is 63% Anglo and 27% Black, and one-third of the students receive free and reduced price lunches. The school is spending approximately $2,000 per student each year.

Two and half years ago, Lonoke collaborated with the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) project, Improving School and Classroom Productivity (Theme D), to increase student achievement and develop more positive teacher attitudes. The project was implemented with the provision by SEDL staff of six inservice sessions addressing effective schools research. Training was provided on each of the effective schools correlates. Role playing, scenarios, and modeling were included as part of the training. Since the outset of the effort, inservice has been ongoing. Lonoke administrators have participated in all training sessions and have been responsible for the school improvement process in their buildings. SEDL and the Arkansas State Department of Education have assisted with follow-up and technical assistance.

After a needs survey was conducted, school leadership teams of four to five faculty members were formed to analyze the data and set goals. Each leadership team member leads a team focusing on one of the effective schools correlates. All teachers have a team assignment. These teams continually meet to discuss problems and set new goals. Lonoke Superintendent Charles Knox maintains that setting up teams and providing them with the necessary inservice is critical to the improvement process becoming institutionalized.

The primary impact of the project has been increased participation of teachers in decision making within the schools. Teachers now feel they have a voice in the changes and improvements taking place in their buildings. Achievement scores have also risen. Since Lonoke's school improvement project began, several teachers have won competitive grants, proving to themselves and their colleagues that teachers' ideas are frequently unique and promising enough to attract funds. Lonoke's largest improvement grant— $90,000 from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation to improve the academic success of at-risk fourth through ninth graders—builds self-esteem and a sense of belonging through cooperative learning, homework centers, and 4-H Leadership programs. In the homework centers, high school students are employed to help younger students with their homework. The school also developed student recognition activities like the B. E. A. R. (Boosting Efforts and Academic Results) incentive

program, which resulted from a school counselor noticing the children's love for a huge stuffed bear donated by a local retailer. Six thousand B. E. A. R. buttons have been awarded for such accomplishments as math mastery, writing excellence, and taking homework seriously.

With almost three years of experience behind them, Lonoke school administrators offer cautions about possible problems. One problem is that changing teacher attitudes is more difficult than one might expect: not all teachers want to be involved in school improvement, while others take the lead and run with it. Another problem is that the instructional leadership role is more difficult for some administrators than others. Finding time for planning is yet another constant challenge. While these kinds of situations can be discouraging, they should be anticipated in any change effort, and solutions can be found when there is strong, visible administrative support for the change project.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Program in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

**Student Academic Performance**
Bayou L'Ourse Primary School, Napoleonville, Louisiana

The Bayou L'Ourse Primary School is in Assumption Parish, a rural area on the coast of southeastern Louisiana. The Assumption Parish School Board serves 4,794 students, of whom about 50% are Anglo and 50% are Black. Over 60% of the students are on free or reduced price lunch programs. Bayou L'Ourse Primary School has a faculty of 10 teachers and serves 184 students in grade K-4. The school district spends $3,070 per student each year.

After an evaluation of achievement test scores, attendance, and discipline reports, the Bayou L'Ourse Primary School project to improve student performance in all areas was implemented in the fall of 1988. The school's improvement plan to attain its goal included: (1) identifying areas of skill weaknesses at each grade level, (2) providing incentives for teacher and student attendance, (3) providing an assertive discipline program, (4) improving the percentage of homework completion, and (5) ensuring that teachers and students are on task.

Both faculty meetings and individual teacher conferences were held to provide an orientation for the professional staff. An orientation session was also held for the students. Inservice sessions included videotapes of Lee Canter's Assertive Discipline Program and discussions of skill weaknesses to be targeted in the classroom.

The principal makes at least three formal observations of classroom instruction each year per teacher. He also is dropping in on each class on a daily basis.

Both students and teachers are provided incentives for good attendance. Students not completing homework assignments are given recess or after school detention. School rules and discipline procedures are outlined in a handbook which is provided to all parents.

The school noted an immediate impact of the plan, including improved test scores, improved attendance, and reduced suspensions. The principal credits much of the success of the project to organization and consistency.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## Hands-on-Science

Madisonville Elementary School, Madisonville, Louisiana

Madisonville is a small community in St. Tammany Parish in southeastern Louisiana, just north of New Orleans. The St. Tammany Parish School Board serves 26,833 students from communities covering an area of 1,141 square miles. The district student population is 83% Anglo, 15% Black, and 2% Hispanic, Asian, and Native American. Approximately one-fourth of the students are on the free or reduced price lunch program. The school district spends $3,000 per student each year. Madisonville Elementary School is a K-3 school with 211 students and 10 teachers.

The goals of "Hands-on-Science" at Madisonville Elementary School are to increase the number of hands-on activities used in science instruction and the amount of time spent on science school-wide. The systematic staff development program for elementary teachers was implemented in the first grade in September, 1989, and subsequent grades are added each year. During the school year, science units are preceded by after-school inservice workshops which include content information and hands-on activities conducted by the school district science specialist. Each workshop is followed by demonstration lessons and coaching sessions in which both teacher and specialist share the responsibility for teaching the lessons. Each lesson is followed by a post conference. In addition, the science specialist frequently visits the science classrooms and is on call at all times, and the principal supports science instruction with periodic classroom visits. Science instruction is also supported by teachers attending Saturday training sessions on effective science teaching.

Teachers in the program eagerly share ideas and materials. Since the school is small, peer collaboration occurs throughout the school day. More formal opportunities for collaboration are provided through scheduled grade level meetings and after-school science workshops.

The Parent Teacher Association has funded the purchase of science materials and supplies to implement the program, and the curriculum office for the school district also loans hands-on materials to the schools.

In end-of-the-year teacher evaluations of the effectiveness of the program in reaching its goals, the teachers reported to be enthusiastic about the program and to have significantly increased the number of hands-on activities and the amount of time spent teaching science. In addition, other content areas have been integrated with the science program.

The school reports that the program does not need a science specialist and can be implemented at any school with a strong science teacher. They suggest the use of a parent volunteer program so that parents can fill in for teachers when they team with the science teacher.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rual Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

**Math Improvement Effort**
Lee Road Junior High School, Covington, Louisiana

Lee Road Junior High serves 319 students in grades 4-7 in Covington, a small community in St. Tammany Parish in southeast Louisiana. The St. Tammany Parish School Board serves 26,833 students from communities in an area covering 1,141 square miles. The district student population is 83% Anglo, 15% Black, and 2% Hispanic, Asian and American Indian. Approximately one-fourth of the students are on free or reduced price lunch programs. The district's per pupil expenditure is approximately $3,000.

Lee Road Junior High School sought to increase student achievement in mathematics through increasing the use of concrete manipulatives to develop math concepts, developing number sense and higher order thinking through questioning, using a problem-solving approach to math instruction, having students work in cooperative groups to accomplish math tasks, and working collaboratively with colleagues. The rural school selected for the project had the lowest percent of students passing the state criterion referenced test in mathematics in the school district.

The systematic staff development effort used a theory, demonstration, coaching, feedback model to reach its objectives. The effects of the project as measured by student achievement scores show that while fifty-one percent of students in grade five passed the mathematics portion of the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP) test in spring of 1989, ninty-seven percent passed in 1990. Also, fifty-four percent of the seventh graders passed the LEAP math test in 1989. The 1990 passing rate was ninty-seven percent.

California Achievement Test (CAT) math composite scores improved as shown:

| Grade 4 | | Grade 5 | | Grade 6 | | Grade 7 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 88/89 | 89/90 | 88/89 | 89/90 | 88/89 | 89/90 | 88/89 | 89/90 |
| 68% | 57.3% | 34.1% | 62.5% | 58.0% | 61.0% | 31.7% | 58.5% |

In addition to having significant improvement in test scores, the school has noted major changes in math instruction as well as staff collegiality and student attitudes toward math.

Inservice sessions were held to present theory on effective math teaching. These were followed with demonstrations to model the practices accepted as effective. Teachers were paired first with the math specialist for coaching and teaching two lessons. Then

peer pairs each served as coach to each other in two math lessons. They were provided release time for a one day training session on effective teaching strategies, all coaching sessions, and collaborating to plan a lesson and to present/observe.

The principal of the school participated in planning and training sessions. He made arrangements for the release time for teachers and gave recognition to the participants and encouraged them for their efforts. He consulted weekly with the district math specialist and made numerous classroom visits to support implementation of the ideas.

Through the curriculum office, all manipulatives needed for implementation of concrete concept development were made available for the teachers. The participants also viewed "Mathematics with Manipulatives," a set of videotapes developed by Marilyn Burns.

The school district credits much of the success of the project to strong administrative support, especially in the securing of release time.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

**Science is Something**
Mandeville Middle School, Mandeville, Louisiana

Mandeville is a community in St. Tammany Parish in southeastern Louisiana, just north of New Orleans. The St. Tammany Parish School Board serves 26,833 students from communities covering an area of 1,141 square miles. The district student population is 83% Anglo, 15% Black, and 2% Hispanic, Asian, and Native American. Approximately one-fourth of the students are on the free or reduced price lunch program. The district spends $3,000 per student each year. Mandeville Middle School serves 1,125 students in grades 4-6. This school recently was one of 221 schools winning the prestigious U. S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Schools Program award. The school had to go through an exhaustive review process that included questionnaires, a review of school records, and two day on-site visits by representatives of the U. S. Department of Education.

The goal of "Science is Something" at Mandeville Middle School is to improve teachers' and students' attitudes about science through the use of hands-on activities. The program encourages teachers to use an activity oriented approach and cooperative learning situations to both increase teaching effectiveness and increase student interest in science.

The program, which was implemented three years ago, includes teacher workshops which give teachers hands-on activities and content information. Each workshop is followed by demonstration lessons in which the lessons are modeled by either the science specialist or peer. The teacher is then coached as the same lesson is taught to another class of students. Each coaching lesson is followed by a post conference. The teachers share their ideas and successes with their peers in special workshops held twice per year.

Over the past three years the school has purchased several thousand dollars worth of hands-on science materials and supplies. In addition, local businesses have donated money and supplies to the program.

The program started with seven teachers. As a result of the enthusiasm of these original seven participants, the program has grown to include 25 teachers. The school reports that the teachers are now attending local, state, and national conferences and Saturday workshops on their own time. The school administration has ear-marked funds to buy more equipment and supplies and to partially fund teacher participation in state and national conferences.

The program does not need a science specialist and could be implemented at any school which has a strong science teacher. The model would also work well for both social studies and mathematics. The school should have a strong parent volunteer program so that parents can fill in for teachers when they attend workshops, model effective lessons, and coach their peers.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## Integrated Pre-School Program

West Feliciana Parish School Board, St. Francisville, Louisiana

West Feliciana Parish is located in the southeastern part of Louisiana, with its central office in St. Francisville. Its three schools, two Pre K-6 and a high school, serve 2,047 students. Ninety eight percent of the students are bussed, some for as long as an hour and a half. About half of the students are Anglo and half are Black. Forty four percent are on free lunch programs. Nine teachers and 130 four-year-olds are involved in the Integrated Pre-School Program. The district's per pupil expenditure is $4,000.

The West Feliciana Parish School Board has developed a five year plan to integrate all elementary special needs students into the regular classroom. Initiated in the fall of 1989, the first year of the plan was limited to the pre-school program, which is offered for all four-year-olds in the district. The special needs students are placed in the regular program, and an itinerant special education teacher, a language development teacher, and an adaptive physical education teacher work with pre-school teachers to meet the needs of the students.

Systematic staff development is an integral part of the program. Prior to the beginning of school, four days of staff development were provided for all of the teachers and paraprofessionals involved in the program. The training, which was provided by the special education supervisor and an outside consultant, addressed developmentally appropriate practices, appropriate classroom environment, and behavior management techniques. Follow-up technical assistance was provided by the special education supervisor, the itinerant special education teacher, and an outside consultant. The teachers were given one hour of release time per week to share ideas, concerns, and solutions.

Inservice training is continuing throughout the year and the summer and is based on specific needs of the teachers. Topics have included more extensive information on behavioral management, curriculum development, and parental involvement. Technical assistance and observation with feedback are ongoing.

The regular and support teachers will attend a three week summer class and will receive graduate hours and stipends. Topics will include cooperative learning, curriculum based instruction, and discipline techniques. The paraprofessionals working in the program will also receive training during the summer.

A continuous cycle of needs assessment and staff development with appropriate incentives is planned for the project as subsequent grades are added to the program. An outside evaluator has been contracted to evaluate the program.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural School
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

**Restructuring for Student Achievement**
Bernalillo Public Schools, Bernalillo, New Mexico

The Bernalillo Public School District is located between Santa Fe and Albuquerque, New Mexico. The district encompasses five hundred square miles and serves approximately 3,300 students from six towns and villages and five Indian pueblos and reservations. Some students are transported a distance of 80 miles daily. The district student population is approximately 44% Native American, 42% Hispanic, and 14% Anglo. Almost 60% of the students are on free or reduced price lunch programs. Eighty percent of the students are limited English proficient.

The Bernalillo Public Schools improvement project was initiated in August, 1989, to assist teachers in the reorganizing, restructuring, and change process required to:

- improve instruction in order to remediate students not achieving success in learning minimum competencies,
- meet the needs of the school's diverse population through multicultural enrichment of the school program, and
- use the whole language approach to teaching reading and writing.

In order to implement the new program at the campus level, school leadership teams were appointed to plan campus based inservice. The school leadership teams and principals meet monthly.

Release time has been provided for administrators, staff, principals, and teacher teams for learning teleconferences, a state relearning conference, and team visits to relearning schools in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Although it is too soon to judge the impact of the project on student achievement, the school reports that they are greatly encouraged by the positive feedback regarding the systematic staff development program implemented to help achieve the project goals. School administrators and board members have been extremely supportive, involved, and committed to the implementation of the project and follow-up at each site.

Project leadership recommends organizing school leadership teams at all schools before school is out in order to provide team building training and activities during the summer and before planning of staff development and the initiation of school activities beginning in the fall. They also recommend keeping documentation of the effort for several years so that a longitudinal assessment can be done.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## Environmental Education

Chichiltah-Jones Ranch School, Vanderwagen, New Mexico

The Chichiltah-Jones Ranch School in Vanderwagen, New Mexico is a Bureau of Indian Affairs school built in the 1930's to serve children in the Navajo community of Chi Chil Tah. Prior to this time, Navajo children who went to school traveled long distances to large boarding institutions far from their homes. The school now serves 240 Navajo students in grades K-7. Ninety five percent of the students are participants in the Free Lunch Program, and 95% are limited English proficient.

The environmental education project at Chichiltah-Jones Ranch School was designed as a holistic program to be integrated into all areas of the school's curriculum. The program was developed to increase student awareness of the natural world and to present them with various types of experiences in order to improve their thinking and problem-solving skills. The Whole Language approach is used to increase the students' skills in the English language. Because environmental awareness is basic to the Navajo tradition, the program can also be used as a resource in Native American studies. The five basic objectives of the program are:

- to develop an awareness of the natural and man-made environment,
- to develop knowledge about how the environment works,
- to develop knowledge about technological, social, cultural, political, and economic relationships today,
- to develop active inquiry and problem-solving skills along with appropriate values to guide behavior in dealing with environmental issues, and
- to motivate the students to apply problem-solving strategies to maintain a balance between quality of life and quality of the environment.

The Environmental Education program was the result of school, community, and national needs assessments in education which point out the need for students to develop higher level thinking skills and problem-solving techniques. The program seeks to provide students with an experience rich program which will allow the use of skills gained in the classroom. Central to the program is the "Outdoor Classroom" which provides a wilderness area in which to study the environment. Assistance in the development of the Environmental Education program was provided by the New Mexico Game and Fish Department, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the National Park Service, the Audubon Society, and the United States Soil Conservation Service.

The school leadership team responsible for overseeing the implementation of the program was composed of the school principal and six teachers. Staff training in Environmental Education both at the school site and off-site was provided by the New Mexico Museum of Natural History, the American Wilderness Leadership School, Project Wild, and the National Audubon Society. The school principal and one of the teachers in the school provide ongoing training and support. The teachers develop units in environmental education using the school resource materials and the outdoor classroom. Each class adopts a particular problem which they develop during the school year.

The Chichiltah-Jones Ranch School model for environmental education was the forerunner for a project sponsored by the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and the New Mexico Center for Rural Education designed to create rural school partnerships to help schools take science out of textbooks and classrooms and into the community. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory has collaborated with the two organizations to disseminate information about the model through a United States Office of Educational Research and Improvement funded project, "Strengthening Science in Rural, Small Schools".

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## Staff Development for Improved Instruction and Learning

Indian Hills Elementary School, Gallup, New Mexico

Indian Hills Elementary School is part of the Gallup-McKinley County School District, which is located in the northwest corner of New Mexico at the southern end of the Rocky Mountains. The district encompasses a 5,000 square mile sparsely populated area 135 miles west of Albuquerque. The student enrollment of 13,000 is 65% Navajo, 20% Anglo, and 15% Hispanic. Seventy percent of the students are in the free or reduced price lunch program. There are 27 schools in the district serving the city of Gallup and nine rural communities. Indian Hills Elementary is in Gallup and serves 397 students.

In 1987, the Indian Hills Elementary School faculty and staff instituted a staff development program designed to focus on improving academic interactions between teachers and students during the instructional process to improve learning. The project was structured to meet needs identified through faculty and parent surveys and a review of student achievement test scores and discipline reports. A leadership team made up of four teachers and the principal was responsible for planning the effort. Current objectives include continuing the process of identifying, studying, and implementing programs designed to improve instruction and learning and continuing participation in critical thinking consortia with the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Committees of teachers have been formed to study specific topics and then to implement new ideas and techniques. A feedback loop is built into implementation strategies. The three committees meet and study on a regular basis. A fourth committee, the Internal Affairs Committee, is involved in general problem solving and shared decision making. All staff is participating through one or more of the school improvement committees.

The current topics under study by the teacher committees are student writing, computer assisted instruction, and critical thinking. As a result of committee efforts, software which will reinforce the school's curriculum is being researched, identified, and purchased. Indian Hills Elementary is one of 100 schools participating in the Computer Telecommunications Science Network with National Geographic. The "Writing to Read Lab" has been introduced for instruction in kindergarten and first grade.

Inservice training is provided after school. As techniques and ideas are put to work, there are provisions for collaboration between teachers. Outside experts have provided seven inservice training sessions at the school site.

The school reports that, as a result of the project, discipline referrals have decreased by close to 50% and that test scores (California Test of Basic Skills) have improved by 5 NCE points in two years. Indian Hills Elementary is improving at a rate of 2.5 times greater than that of the district. Parents report that their children are happier and are more eager to go to school in the morning.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

**Program for Effective Teaching (PET)**
El Reno Public Schools, El Reno, Oklahoma

El Reno is in central Oklahoma, 40 miles west of Oklahoma City. The school district serves 2,651 students. Eighty seven percent of the students are Anglo, 8% are Black, 4% are Native American, and 1% is Hispanic. Almost one-third of the student population receive free or reduced price lunches. The school spends approximately $2,300 per student each year.

In order to provide all its teachers with a knowledge base and framework for making instructional decisions and a common language for communication with each other, the El Reno Public Schools initiated a district wide staff development program in the Program for Effective Teaching (PET) model. PET is a comprehensive model for delivering instruction which is appropriate for all students, including special needs students, all grade levels, and all subjects. It addresses classroom management skills, human relations skills, planning skills, selection and use of appropriate materials, knowledge of content, and instructional skills. The model is taught by a certified instructor.

In August, 1989, a 1 1/2 day orientation was held for the entire school staff. Between August and January, every teacher in the El Reno system was given release time to attend a week long PET seminar. All administrators and two of the school district board members have gone through the training. Workshop instruction was provided by an outside consultant and two staff members who had received training off site and had become certified instructors.

The PET training provides for active participation, guided practice, and constant feedback. The behaviors and skills exhibited by the PET instructors during training are based on the PET model. During the sessions, teachers work in pairs, small groups, and the total group. The school reports that the seminar participants become bonded as a result of the activities and discussions. Assistance between training sessions is available through books, commercial videos, and trained resource people.

Teacher evaluations of the training sessions have been 100% positive. Classroom teaching has been observed to be more relevant, effective, and efficient. Although no evaluation of student achievement is yet available, the school reports the impact from the training has reached the students through their better trained teachers. There is also reported a renewed community awareness of the educational commitment of the school system.

A skilled trainer is needed to assist with planning the staff development and to train staff members who will provide the training within the district. A concentrated period of time is necessary for the training sessions.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## Kingston Public School Staff Development Plan

Kingston Public Schools, Kingston, Oklahoma

The Kingston Public School System is located in southern Oklahoma near Lake Texoma. The 161 square mile area it serves has experienced rapid growth in population in the last three decades, mainly as a result of the construction and development of Lake Texoma and the lake area. The school district serves 815 students on three campuses. About 50% of the students are participating in the free or reduced price lunch program. The district's yearly per pupil expenditure is $2,639.

The Kingston Staff Development Plan has been in place since 1981. The school district is now in the fourth year of their second five year planning cycle. The plan has an overall purpose of improving the educational environment and is based on continued development of educational skills.

The Staff Development Plan is developed by a committee composed of eight elementary, middle school and high school teachers, a parent, and two school administrators. The present plan is based on a 1986 needs assessment questionnaire completed by parents, faculty members, and local business owners. The priorities established as a result of the needs assessment are re-evaluated each year. The current priorities are: (1) meeting individual students needs, i.e. career awareness, drug abuse education, student emotional problems and guidance techniques in the classroom, and AIDS education; (2) student motivation; (3) student discipline; and (4) keeping up to date on new teaching trends, new techniques, and new materials. Next year's priorities are burnout prevention, stress management, testing referral/due process, and self esteem/ positive reinforcement.

The school uses the full range of resources available to them, including institutions of higher education, the State Department of Education, a regional service center, the Master Teacher in Manhattan, Kansas, and a professional development center in their area. Release time is given for attendance at workshops, substitutes are provided, and expenses are paid. A wide variety of instructional methods are used for staff development. During effective teaching and evaluation workshops, clinicians demonstrate procedures and assign specific objectives. The teachers practice the assigned procedures, present them to their peers, and receive feedback from peers and clinicians.

The school reports that test results have improved and new methods learned in workshops are utilized in the classroom. The staff development plan is evaluated each year in terms of completion of planned activities, attainment of objectives, and cost. The staff development committee is responsible for this evaluation.

The school district credits the success of their program to strong administrative support, including the commitment of substantial financial resources and the control of staff development by the committee rather than by administrators. Faculty members, as well as administrators, should view staff development in a positive way and carry that feeling into the workshops.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Imporvement

**Little Axe Effective Schools Program**
Little Axe Public Schools, Norman, Oklahoma

The Little Axe School System is in Norman, Oklahoma, which is located in the central part of the state, just south of Oklahoma City. The district serves an area of 55 square miles. The 1,253 students are 77% Anglo, 20% Native American, and 3% Black and Hispanic. Thirty percent of the students receive free or reduced price lunches. Little Axe School's per pupil expenditure is approximately $2,500.

When the Little Axe Advisory Committee, made up of administrators and faculty members, set out to improve communication between the two groups in 1987, it soon became apparent that effective teacher evaluations and teaching models were of central concern. Because the advisory committee felt that formulating an evaluation instrument and studying teaching models was a task deserving of special attention, a larger, more representative committee, called the Little Axe Effective Teacher Committee, was formed to study the issues. Committee members were selected based on a set of criteria related to teaching and human relations skills and productivity. This group found that the selection of teaching models and evaluation instruments necessitated district-wide establishment of goals and objectives.

At this point, Joe Work, the Little Axe Schools' superintendent, arranged for the Kelwyn Group of New York, a recognized authority in effective schools training, to present the committee members with training in the effective schools program. In January 1988, the school district, through the approval and adoption of a new mission statement was on its way to school improvement using the Ron Edmonds correlates of effective schools as guiding principles. Systematic staff development was essential to success of the effort. In February, faculty and staff received an orientation to the effective school research at an inservice session. Later that spring, a survey instrument based on the five correlates was administered to all faculty. During the summer of 1989, the school's Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) scores were disaggregated, and the data from both measurements was reported to the board of education and then was used to plan for fall inservice training.

The entire faculty was trained in effective schools research in a three-day pre-school inservice. Future plans include providing this training for the leadership of the Parent Teacher Organization and interested community members. After the inservice, faculty and staff were assigned to the various correlate areas. These groups will then develop goals for their correlates and from these goals will develop school/district goals which will be used to plan future inservice as well as other school improvement strategies.

In the fall of 1989, the school applied for and received $18,000 in discretionary funding under ESEA Chapter 2 of Public Law 100-297. These funds are being used to train school administrators in the Madeline Hunter model to improve instructional leadership. A cadre of teachers was also trained, and these teachers are in turn training the entire teaching staff in the Madeline Hunter teaching model.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## Walters Elementary Integrated Learning Approach

Walters Elementary School, Walters, Oklahoma

The Walters Public School System serves 694 students in southwestern Oklahoma. The school district encompasses 244 square miles. The student population is 80% Anglo and 20% Native American. Thirty percent of the students are on free or reduced lunch programs. The school district's yearly per pupil expenditure is approximately $2,800. Walters Elementary has an enrollment of 381 students.

The Walters Elementary Integrated Learning Approach, which was initiated in the fall of 1988, is designed to involve the entire faculty in using a hands-on integrated teaching/learning process for all academic areas. It is based on the belief that subjects should be related to each other and that students acquire knowledge best through a process of doing and relating. The teaching strategies used include "Whole Language," an integrated approach to language arts which is used across all academic areas, and hands-on math and science programs.

The objectives for systematic staff development are (1) to train the faculty in whole language techniques to be used in reading and social studies by the fall of 1991, (2) to train the faculty in the use of the hands-on math program by the fall of 1992, and (3) to train the faculty in a hands-on science approach by the fall of 1993. The teachers are expected to implement the approaches as they receive the training.

The Integrated Learning Approach is essentially a composite of techniques which have been developed by others, i.e., (1) Whole Language, (2) Math Their Way, (3) Cooperative Learning, and (4) Developmental Kindergarten and Pre-First. Staff development involves learning the techniques, refining them for the local situation, and implementing.

Local staff development sessions are conducted formally and informally, where the use of small groups increases participation. Sessions for feedback and cross grade level communications have been held, wherein faculty members make presentations and conduct discussions. Special sessions have been held to train teachers in the construction of hands-on materials. Faculty members are given opportunities to visit other schools using the desired teaching strategies since the resources for on site technical assistance are not available. Travel expenses are paid by the school district for these visits.

The school reports that the most exciting thing happening at the school is a change in faculty attitude. Ninety percent are participating in planning sessions and attending classes and workshops. The teachers are truly sharing information and encouraging one another. Peer leadership and feedback through inservice are considered critical to the successful implementation of the Integrated Learning Approach

Ninety percent of the faculty is in a change mode and is implementing the new teaching strategies with above average success. There is a pervasive belief that all students can learn because a climate where it can happen has been created. The students are actively demonstrating higher order thinking skills and discipline problems have decreased.

A major insight to come out of the project is that the teachers have to work harder, spending more time planning than in the past, to successfully implement integrated learning approaches; but the results have been gratifying. There is increased interest in learning how to use technology to simplify staff efforts and to enhance learning.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

**Life Management Skills For Migrant Students**
The Central Stream Migrant Education Program Development Center
Texas A&I University, Kingsville, Texas

The Central Stream Migrant Education Program Development Center is part of a network of such centers established to help school districts build effective support programs for migrant children in the central portion of the United States. The Center is located at Texas A&I University in Kingsville, a small town on the south Texas coast. The school districts in three south Texas towns, La Joya, McAllen, and Mission, are participating in a program with the Center to train professional staff in a curriculum designed to improve the self-esteem of migrant students.

Through the training program, titled Life Management Skills (LMS), participants are provided strategies for: (1) developing positive intra-personal skills through a series of activities designed for students to analyze themselves and the cause of a poor self-concept; (2) developing positive intra-personal skills through a series of activities designed for students to examine their attitudes and their relationship to others; (3) assisting students to develop responsibility, trust, listening, assertiveness, and communication skills. All of the student activities are experiential, and are conducted during a weekend retreat.

The staff receiving the training attend three weekend sessions held from 5:00 on Friday evening until noon on Sunday, which requires a real commitment. A follow-up session can also be requested. In the training, the participants themselves are involved in activities to develop inter- and intra-personal relationships. At the end of the training sessions, participants are provided an LMS curriculum guide.

The schools have noted positive changes in both the staff and the students who have participated in the program. It has been observed that teachers from different subject areas find a common bond in teaching the same students and begin to seek each other out to find solutions to their problems.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## San Diego I.S.D. Follow-Through Plan

San Diego Independent School District, San Diego, Texas

San Diego Independent School District is located in a small community in Duval County in south Texas 100 miles from the Mexico border. It serves students from a 490 square mile area. Ninety-nine percent of the students are Hispanic, and over 80% are on the free or reduced price lunch program. The school's per pupil expenditure is $2,000. One hundred students in Anna Norman Collins Primary and Parr Elementary Schools are participating in the Follow-Through Program. Sixty percent of these students must have been in Head Start or other pre-school programs. All are low income and limited English proficient.

The San Diego Follow-Through Program began in 1969 as a pilot project. It is now in the second year of the current funding cycle of a U. S. Department of Education grant of $72,000 per year. The primary goal of the project is to provide comprehensive services in the early grades to maintain and enhance the gains made by young children in Head Start and other pre-school programs. The project is sponsored by Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) in Austin which provides technical assistance; teacher and parent training, evaluation, and other services. The SEDL Language Development Model, which focuses on language development in all early elementary academic areas using flexible seating arrangements, supplementary instructional materials, and multiple instructional approaches, is being used by the project. The model consists of five instructional strategies:

(1) It is built on accepted first and second-language acquisition theory and research;
(2) It incorporates effective teaching/learning practices;
(3) Locally adopted curriculum materials are supplemented by SEDL-developed materials and others selected by teachers from commercial distributors;
(4) It is supported by a strong continuing staff development program; and
(5) It is supported by active parent participation.

Also important to the program is provision of services in areas ranging from health care to nutrition to other social services.

The teachers participating in the project receive additional compensation for activities beyond regular teaching duties. They are actively involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating effective classroom management and teaching. The teachers have opportunities for peer collaboration during inservice activities and local campus contact throughout the school year. A strong liaison is also established with the teachers in the nearby Follow-Through Model demonstration site in Benavides, Texas. Ongoing technical assistance is provided by SEDL through the mail and telephone communication.

Student performance in the Follow-Through Program is evaluated through comparisons of test scores using control groups of students not participating in the project. The project students consistently perform better than non-project students. During the 1988-89 school year, project student performance in three standardized achievement test areas (reading, math, and language) for all four grade levels (K-3) was higher than non-project student performance. During May, 1989 parents of children in the program were surveyed to determine their opinions about the program. Responses to this survey were overwhelmingly positive. In response to the question, "What would you change about the program?", parents suggested that more parents should get involved, more classes should be formed, more children should be in the program, and that more regular meetings to discuss children's education should be held.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## Prescription Learning

Tomball Independent School District, Tomball, Texas

Tomball is a small town in southeast Texas just north of the Houston metropolitan complex. The Tomball School District serves 4,650 students from a surrounding area of 88 square miles. Fourteen percent of the students are participating in the free or reduced price lunch program. The district's annual per pupil expenditure is $4,876.

The Prescription Learning Program was initiated in 1985 to improve the performance of low achieving students through the use of computer assisted instruction. The students are initially tested on numerous skills in mathematics and language arts. They are then given an "instructional prescription" to address specific deficiencies. The students work with the aid of the computer on lessons to improve their skills. Once skills are mastered on a given level, the computer tests the student, and the process begins again. The students progress according to their own needs and learning styles. The school district has established three prescriptive learning labs, one in an elementary Chapter One Program, one at an alternative school, and one in a junior high "at-risk" program. Students are selected for the program based on a three-way matrix: the number of years behind grade level, the number of failures in math and language arts, and standardized test scores. The students exit the program when they are performing at grade level.

The Prescription Learning Program staff consists of one administrator, three teachers, and four support staff members. The staff receives training sessions and technical assistance on a monthly basis. "Hot-line" assistance from trained specialists is also available. The teaching staff has ample opportunity for group-interaction in the project, and collaborative learning is used for specific tasks. The school reports that the teachers need to be flexible, innovative, and knowledgeable in several content areas, and that technical support is a must.

The success of the program is observable in both test scores and student behaviors. At the alternative school, the average gains for a 30-day assignment are 1.2 years for math and .8 years for language arts. In the junior high program the teacher reports that over 80% of the students who were on the first prescriptive learning classes are still in school, some are currently enrolled in honors classes, and many are now participating in various extra-curricular activities. Self-esteem is raised tremendously when the students learn they can learn. Another benefit noted is that the computer removes the frustration and anger which can occur between teacher and student in a difficult teaching/learning situation.

In addition to technological expertise and a well trained staff, the school district credits the success of their program to a central administration which fully supports the program both financially and technically, and principals who are involved and who give support, guidance, and asistance.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

## Learning to Love Computers

Etoile Independent School District, Etoile, Texas

The Etoile school district is a very small rural district located in Nacogdoches County in east Texas. The school serves 114 students in grades K-8. Thirty eight percent of the students receive free or reduced price lunches. One hundred thirteen students are Anglo and one student is Black.

In the fall of 1989, the school district installed twelve computers in a classroom lab to be used by students at all grade levels. Halfway through the first year of this ambitious program, the school reports that the teachers are brimming with enthusiasm. Jim Carr, superintendent of Etoile school, said, "Almost everyone on the faculty has seen the computers as a benefit for the classroom teacher as well as the student."

In 1988, the administration of the school system became concerned because their students were not using computers in a consistent way. All kindergarten and first grade students used a computer lab, but after this initial contact, the students did not use computers again until after the 5th grade. The school was meeting the state mandate to utilize computers before the 6th grade, but there was a need for improvements.

A committee comprised of school board members, administrators, parents, and teachers was formed to find a way to address this problem. The committee decided on two requirements for the kind of computer technology the school system needed. First, they wanted a software package which would help teachers provide individualized instruction for children with a broad range of abilities. And second, they wanted computers placed both in the classrooms and in a separate lab. After considering many options, the Board selected the Basic Learning System of the Jostens Learning Corporation. The system provides self paced learning and has a sophisticated management system which allows teachers to print reports showing how each student is doing.

The school credits the involvement of the teachers from the very beginning of the selection process as a major step in selling teachers on the idea of computers. The company also provided a superb training program at the beginning of school. For follow-up technical assistance the school system signed a five-year consulting contract with the Jostens company. Under the terms of the contract, each teacher sees a consultant a minimum of once a month. The consultants are former classroom teachers who are thoroughly familiar with the software and understand the problems teachers have in combining whole group activities with individualized instruction.

Superintendent Carr, in offering an explanation for Etoile's success, said, "Teachers knew from the beginning that we were going to provide the additional consulting and staff development that was required, and that made them feel better. When we also explained we were going to take it step by step and not issue top-down rules on how the computers had to be used, they really relaxed."

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development in School improvement

**Texas Mathematics Staff Development Program**
Region XVI Education Service Center, Amarillo, Texas

The Texas Mathematics Staff Development Program is a statewide project funded by the Texas Education Agency through the Dwight D. Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Act, Title II, designed to improve math instruction in the state. The Region XVI Education Service Center (ESC) is an intermediate education unit which serves the panhandle of Texas. This is a 25,000 square mile area with 69 school districts ranging in student population from 28 to 27,300. Of the 69 school districts, 64 have fewer than 2,500 students.

Three of the teaching modules developed by the Texas Mathematics Staff Development Program address problem-solving skills for grades pre-kindergarten through eighth. Because regional student achievement scores in problem solving were weak and teacher evaluations showed that teachers were weak in teaching problem solving, Betty Kirk and Rose Poulain, two curriculum and instruction specialists from the Region XVI ESC, elected to use these three modules to train all elementary teachers in the area of problem solving.

To overcome the problem of so many schools to reach in such a large area, a "cluster" approach was used. Workshops are arranged in a centrally located district, and teachers from the surrounding districts are invited to attend. The training was begun in November, 1988, and will be completed by summer, 1991. In some cases funds have been provided for the cost of substitutes to provide release time for the teachers receiving the training. Some of the training has also been offered on Saturdays.

The problem solving modules first address why teaching problem solving is so important, then teachers are given activities to make them comfortable as problem solvers. This is followed by training in how to give students experience in problem solving along with the issue of planning and evaluating problem solving lessons. Teachers are active participants throughout the training. The modules are written so that presenters demonstrate, then participants practice problem solving. This is followed by discussions of processes used and the feelings teachers experience as they go through the problem solving process.

The teachers also bring some of their own materials, write a lesson plan, and present the lesson to other members of the group. After all participants present their lessons, the groups discuss important points and share feelings.

One of the most notable results of the training has been more requests for mathematics workshops from the teachers who have participated in the training. There have also been more requests for training in the use of manipulatives and for demonstration lessons.

The project director, Bonnie McNemar, credits much of the success of the project to the involvement of school district administrators from the beginning. The support of this group is felt to be invaluable as the project attempts to reach all districts. The use of the cluster concept when working with small districts is also highly recommended.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

**Benavides Elementary Follow-Through Program**
Benavides Elementary School, Benavides, Texas

Benavides is located in south Texas about 100 miles from the Mexico border, 35 miles from Kingsville and 60 miles from Corpus Christi. The district serves 709 students, 99% of whom are Hispanic. Nearly 80% participate in the free or reduced price lunch program. The district's per pupil expenditure is $3,650. The 50 students in the Benavides Elementary Follow-Through Program are for the most part limited English proficient, low socio-economic, and have had previous experience in Head Start or Early Childhood Education.

The Benavides I. S. D. Follow-Through Program is funded by the National Follow-Through Office of the U. S. Department of Education to sustain gains which may have been made in pre-school or Head Start. It is primarily for low-income and Limited English Proficient (LEP) children. The Benavides project is sponsored by Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) in Austin which provides technical assistance, teacher and parent training, evaluation, and other services. The demonstration project operates in one classroom in each grade level from kindergarten through the third grade. It is a three year project and is in its second year of implementation. The main purpose of the project is English language development. The project is using the SEDL Language Experience Approach to Language Development Model. This model focuses on language development in all early elementary academic areas using flexible seating arrangements, supplementary instructional materials, and multiple instructional approaches. SEDL's Language Development Model consists of five instructional strategies:

(1) It is built on accepted first and second language acquisition theory and research;
(2) It incorporates effective teaching/learning practices;
(3) Locally adopted curriculum materials are supplemented by SEDL-developed materials and others selected by teachers from commercial distributors;
(4) It has a strong continuing staff development program; and
(5) It is supported by active parent participation.

Also important to the program is the availability and use of health and nutritional services.

The teachers participating in the project are actively involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating effective classroom management and teaching. They receive additional monetary compensation for inservice activities before and after the school year.

Peer collaboration opportunities are plentiful during inservice activities as well as on campus. A strong liaison is also established with the teachers in the nearby Follow-Through Model demonstration site in San Diego, Texas. Ongoing technical assistance is provided by SEDL through the mail and telephone communication.

Student performance in the Follow-Through project is evaluated through comparisons of test scores using control groups of students not participating in the project. The project students are consistently performing better than non-project students in all comparisons (across subtest areas and grades). In baseline versus first year performance comparisons, the project students registered greater performance increases or smaller decreases in seven out of nine comparisons. Responses to a parent survey conducted in June, 1989 were overwhelmingly positive about the program. When asked "What would you change about the program?", parents suggested that more parents should become involved with the program, that they would like to participate more in the classroom, and that stipends for parents should be larger.

The Follow-Through Program in Benavides is directed and coordinated out of the district's Office of Special Programs, side-by-side with thirteen other programs. This arrangement facilitates linkages between other programs, avoids duplication, prevents supplanting, and generally helps district programs to compliment each other. The office is directed by Dr. Ramon H. Tanguma.

The Follow-Through Program, therefore, is well accepted by the rest of the school district. The Board, superintendent, principal, and other administrators support the project highly. All faculty are aware of the program and endorse it.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

**Curriculum Development in Energy Education Project (C-DEEP)**
Seguin Independent School District, Seguin, Texas

Seguin is a community of 22,500 residents located in south central Texas thirty six miles east of San Antonio. The Seguin school district serves 6,778 students of whom 48% are Hispanic, 43% are Anglo, and 9% are Black. The students come from five communities encompassing an area of 500 square miles. Forty two percent are on free or reduced price lunch programs. The school serves 443 migrant students. The district's yearly per pupil expenditure is $3,706.

C-DEEP, also known as the Seguin Model, was developed as the result of a perceived need to raise the quality of science education at every level, to expand participation of students, and to encourage students to choose careers in engineering, science, and science teaching. Dr. Dick Hammond, Professor of Science Education at Southwest Texas State University ( SWTSU) in San Marcos, Texas found very little time spent on energy flow concepts in pre-secondary school settings, although an understanding of energy flow is basic to understanding how nature functions. He found few activities in elementary school science textbooks and curricula which would foster this need for concept development in energy flow. He conducted a needs survey of area teachers and found that teachers in rural areas felt that instruction in physics was their most critical need.

Dr. Hammond, in cooperation with the Seguin school district, applied for funding for a project to provide staff development in teaching energy flow concepts to elementary school teachers. Funding for the project came from five grants over a period of two years. There were also contributions of many hours beyond those compensated by the grant.

In the pilot project in 1988, twelve fifth and sixth grade teachers in Seguin were trained in individual six hour inservice sessions taught by Dr. Hammond. Substitute teachers were provided so that the teachers could be released from their classrooms to receive that training. Each teacher went through the same activities they would expect their students to go through to learn about energy flow. No expensive equipment or teaching materials were necessary to teach the concepts. Training was subsequently provided for all secondary science teachers also. Follow-up technical assistance in the schools is provided by district curriculum specialists and Dr. Hammond. The training is also offered in a summer graduate program at SWTSU. *A Curriculum Activities Guide for Improving the Teaching and Learning of Physics* was developed as a result of the project.

Evaluation of the project using pre- and post-test scores of the students in the pilot program in Seguin consistently show significant gains. A longitudinal study of the effects of the curriculum on the students in the pilot program is being conducted with all seventh grade teachers. It is hoped that funding will be available to continue the longitudinal study as students move through subsequent grades. Teacher attitudes have been positive, and positive attitudes have been observed in the classroom setting.

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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Exemplary Programs in Rural Schools
Using Systematic Staff Development for School Improvement

**Willis I. S. D. Staff Development Plan**
Willis Independent School District, Willis, Texas

The Willis school district encompasses 145 square miles in North Montgomery County in East Texas. The area is just north of the Houston metropolitan complex. The district serves 2,761 students of which 83% are Anglo, 12% are Black, and 5% are Hispanic. Approximately one-third of the students receive free or reduced price lunches. By district definition, 20% of the student population is at risk. The district spends approximately $3,500 per student each year. Due to rapid population growth in the area, the student enrollment has doubled in the past 10 years.

In 1989, as part of a comprehensive strategic plan for school improvement, the district initiated a systematic staff development plan with far reaching objectives. The plan was based on needs determined through surveys of both school and community concerns, and reviews of test scores, teacher performance, and campus data, such as drop-out statistics, attendance, and discipline reports. The ten objectives for staff development are:

(1) to implement individualized professional development plans by 1990;
(2) to begin distribution of a quarterly publication about research on effective teaching by 1990;
(3) to implement a mentorship program for new teachers by 1991;
(4) to implement content specific development programs to improve job related skills by 1991;
(5) to implement a competency based discipline management system by 1992;
(6) to implement research based instruction practices which will prepare teachers to increase student achievement by 1992;
(7) to identify in-house talent who will serve as the major resource for staff development programs by 1990;
(8) to establish the Willis Academy to help district staff develop their own knowledge and skills through critical reading of the classics by 1991;
(9) to grant district staff sabbatical leave for professional growth by 1992:
(10) to provide stress reduction and physical fitness programs for all employees by 1991.

Action plans which specify tasks, timelines, and persons responsible have been developed for each objective. Most of the objectives are being addressed by committees composed of appropriate district personnel and other persons. Campus leadership teams plan some building level inservice, while much of the professional development is based on individual choice by the teachers. Some specific training sessions are

required for all teachers while others are voluntary. Each teacher is given at least one day of release time per year for professional development.

The core training program for all teachers addresses Outcome Based Education and effective schools research. The district has developed its own teaching model, the Willis I.S.D. Mastery Model, which is, in turn, modeled in all staff development programs.

The district considers its "Tap Local Talent" (TLT) program one of the outstanding features if its staff development program. Funds are being sought to compensate personnel who participate, and extended contracts with compensation for TLT personnel are being offered. These persons will be included in a catalog listing staff development programs available to the school district.

The school reports that since implementation of the program, faculty is much more aware of and interested in developments in educational research. Evaluation of each objective is built into the action plans.

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